PLOTINUS

THE *ENNEADS* OF PLOTINUS WITH PHILOSOPHICAL COMMENTARIES edited by John M. Dillon and Andrew Smith

ENNEAD IV.3–4.29

Problems Concerning the Soul

Translation | Introduction | Commentary

JOHN M. DILLON
H.J. BLUMENTHAL

PLOTINUS
ENNEAD IV.3–IV.4.29

THE *ENNEADS* OF PLOTINUS

With Philosophical Commentaries

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Contents

Introduction to the Series 1
Abbreviations 11
Preface and Acknowledgments 13
INTRODUCTION TO THE TREATISE 17
Note on the Text 39
Synopsis 41
TRANSLATION 53
COMMENTARY 165
Ennead IV.3
Chapter 1, 1–16 165
Chapter 2 175
Chapters 3–6 182
Chapter 4 187
Chapter 5 192
Chapter 6 197
Chapter 7 203
Chapter 8 207
Chapter 9 215
Chapter 10 220
Chapter 11 225
Chapter 12 228
Chapter 13 233
Chapter 14 236

Chapter 15 240
Chapter 16 244
Chapter 17 247
Chapter 18 253
Chapter 19 256
Chapter 20 260
Chapter 21 268
Chapter 22 270
Chapter 23 272
Chapter 24 277
Chapter 25 283
Chapter 26 291
Chapter 27 299
Chapter 28 303
Chapter 29 306
Chapter 30 310
Chapter 31 312
Chapter 32 316

Ennead IV.4
Chapter 1 321
Chapter 2 327
Chapter 3 330
Chapter 4 332
Chapter 5 334
Chapter 6 338
Chapter 7 340

Chapter 8 342
Chapter 9 348
Chapter 10 350
Chapter 11 354
Chapter 12 356
Chapter 13 359
Chapter 14 361
Chapter 15 363
Chapter 16 366
Chapter 17 369
Chapter 18 373
Chapter 19 378
Chapter 20 380
Chapter 21 384
Chapter 22 387
Chapter 23 393
Chapter 24 396
Chapter 25 400
Chapter 26 402
Chapter 27 406
Chapter 28 409
Chapter 29 414

Select Bibliography 419
Index of Ancient Authors 429
Index of Names and Subjects 437

To

My Grandson

Kian

Introduction to the Series With a Brief Outline of the Life and Thought of Plotinus (205–270 CE)

Plotinus was born in 205 CE in Egypt of Greek-speaking parents. He attended the philosophical schools in Alexandria where he would have studied Plato (427–347 BCE), Aristotle (384–322 BCE), the Stoics and Epicureans as well as other Greek philosophical traditions. He began his serious philosophical education, however, relatively late in life, at the age of twenty-seven and was deeply impressed by the Platonist Ammonius Saccas about whom we, unfortunately, know very little, but with whom Plotinus studied for some eleven years. Even our knowledge of Plotinus' life is limited to what we can glean from Porphyry's introduction to his edition of his philosophical treatises, an account colored by Porphyry's own concerns. After completing his studies in Alexandria Plotinus attempted, by joining a military expedition of the Roman emperor Gordian III, to make contact with the

Brahmins in order to learn something of Indian thought. Unfortunately Gordian was defeated and killed (244). Plotinus somehow managed to extract himself and we next hear of him in Rome where he was able to set up a school of philosophy in the house of a high-ranking Roman lady by the name of Gemina. It is, perhaps, surprising that he had no formal contacts with the Platonic Academy in Athens, which was headed at the time by Longinus, but Longinus was familiar with his work, partly at least through Porphyry who had studied in Athens. The fact that it was Rome where Plotinus set up his school may be due to the originality of his philosophical activity and to his patrons. He clearly had some influential contacts, not least with the philhellenic emperor Gallienus (253–268), who may also have encouraged his later failed attempt to set up a civic community based on Platonic principles in a ruined city in Campania.

Plotinus' school was, like most ancient schools of philosophy, relatively small in scale, but did attract distinguished students from abroad and from the Roman upper classes. It included not only philosophers but also politicians and members of the medical profession who wished to lead the philosophical life. His most famous student was Porphyry (233–305) who, as a relative latecomer to the school, persuaded him to put into writing the results of his seminars. It is almost certain that we possess most, if not all, of his written output, which represents

his mature thought, since he didn't commence writing until the age of forty-eight. The school seemingly had inner and outer circles, and Plotinus himself was clearly an inspiring and sympathetic teacher who took a deep interest in the philosophical and spiritual progress of his students. Porphyry tells us that when he was suffering from severe depression Plotinus straight away visited him in his lodgings to help him. His concern for others is also illustrated by the fact that he was entrusted with the personal education of many orphans and the care of their property and careers. The reconciliation of this worldly involvement with the encouragement to lead a life of contemplation is encapsulated in Porphyry's comment that "he was present to himself and others at the same time."

The *Enneads* of Plotinus is the edition of his treatises arranged by his pupil Porphyry who tried to put shape to the collection he had inherited by organizing it into six sets of nine treatises (hence the name "*Enneads*") that led the reader through the levels of Plotinus' universe, from the physical world to Soul, Intellect and, finally, to the highest principle, the One. Although Plotinus undoubtedly had a clearly structured metaphysical system by the time he began committing himself to expressing his thought in written form, the treatises themselves are not systematic expositions, but rather explorations of particular themes and issues raised in interpreting Plato and other philosophical texts read in the School. In fact, to achieve his

neat arrangement Porphyry was sometimes driven even to dividing certain treatises (e.g., II.2–3; IV.3–5, and VI.4–5).

Although Plotinus' writings are not transcripts of his seminars, but are directed to the reader, they do, nevertheless, convey the sort of lively debate that he encouraged in his school. Frequently he takes for granted that a particular set of ideas is already familiar as having been treated in an earlier seminar that may or may not be found in the written text. For this reason it is useful for the reader to have some idea of the main philosophical principles of his system as they can be extracted from the *Enneads* as a whole.

Plotinus regarded himself as a faithful interpreter of Plato whose thought lies at the core of his entire project. But Plato's thought, whilst definitive, does according to Plotinus require careful exposition and clarification, often in the light of other thinkers such as Aristotle and the Stoics. It is because of this creative application of different traditions of ancient thought to the interpretation of Plato that Plotinus' version of Platonism became, partly through the medium of later Platonists such as Porphyry, Iamblichus (245–325), and Proclus (412–485), an influential source and way of reading both Plato and Aristotle in the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and up to the early 19th century, when scholars first began to differentiate Plato and "Neoplatonism." His thought, too, provided early Christian theologians of the Latin and particularly of the Byzantine

tradition, with a rich variety of metaphysical concepts with which to explore and express difficult doctrinal ideas. His fashioning of Plato's ideas into a consistent metaphysical structure, though no longer accepted as a uniquely valid way of approaching Plato, was influential in promoting the notion of metaphysical systems in early modern philosophy. More recently increasing interest has centered on his exploration of the self, levels of consciousness, and his expansion of discourse beyond the levels of normal ontology to the examination of what lies both above and beneath being. His thought continues to challenge us when confronted with the issue of man's nature and role in the universe and of the extent and limitations of human knowledge.

Whilst much of Plotinus' metaphysical structure is recognizably an interpretation of Plato it is an interpretation that is not always immediately obvious just because it is filtered through several centuries of developing Platonic thought, itself already overlaid with important concepts drawn from other schools. It is, nevertheless, useful as a starting point to see how Plotinus attempts to bring coherence to what he believed to be a comprehensive worldview expressed in the Platonic dialogues. The Platonic Forms are central. They become for him an intelligible universe that is the source and model of the physical universe. But aware of Aristotle's criticism of the Platonic Forms as lifeless causes he takes on board Aristotle's concept

of god as a self-thinker to enable him to identify this intelligible universe as a divine Intellect that thinks itself as the Forms or Intelligibles. The doctrine of the Forms as the thoughts of god had already entered Platonism, but not as the rigorously argued identity that Plotinus proposed. Moreover the Intelligibles, since they are identical with Intellect, are themselves actively intellectual; they are intellects. Thus Plato's world of Forms has become a complex and dynamic intelligible universe in which unity and plurality, stability, and activity are reconciled.

Now although the divine Intellect is one it also embraces plurality, both because its thoughts, the Intelligibles, are many and because it may itself be analyzed into thinker and thought. Its unity demands a further principle, which is the cause of its unity. This principle, which is the cause of all unity and being but does not possess unity or being in itself, he calls the One, an interpretation of the Idea of the Good in Plato's *Republic* that is "beyond being" and that may be seen as the simple (hence "one") source of all reality. We thus have the first two of what subsequently became known as the three Hypostases, the One, Intellect, and Soul, the last of which acts as an intermediary between the intelligible and physical universes. This last Hypostasis takes on all the functions of transmitting form and life that may be found in Plato, although Plato himself does not always make such a clear distinction between soul and intellect. Thus the One is the ultimate source of all, including this universe, which is

then prefigured in Intellect and transmitted through Soul to become manifest as our physical universe. Matter, which receives imperfectly this expression, is conceived not as an independently existing counter-principle, a dangerously dualist notion, but is in a sense itself a product of the One, a kind of non-being that, while being nothing specific in itself, nevertheless is not simply not there.

But this procession from an ultimate principle is balanced by a return movement at each level of reality that fully constitutes itself only when it turns back in contemplation of its producer. And so the whole of reality is a dynamic movement of procession and return, except for matter, which has no life of its own to make this return; it is inert. This movement of return, which may be traced back to the force of "love" in Plato or Aristotle's final cause, is characterized by Plotinus as a cognitive activity, a form of contemplation, weaker at each successive level, from Intellect through discursive reasoning to the merest image of rational order as expressed in the objects of the physical universe.

The human individual mirrors this structure to which we are all related at each level. For each of us has a body and soul, an intellect, and even something within us that relates to the One. While it is the nature of soul to give life to body, the higher aspect of our soul also has aspirations toward intellect, the true self, and even beyond. This urge to return corresponds to the cosmic movement of return.

But the tension between soul's natural duty to body and its origins in the intelligible can be, for the individual, a source of fracture and alienation in which the soul becomes over-involved and overwhelmed by the body and so estranged from its true self. Plotinus encourages us to make the return or ascent, but at the same time attempts to resolve the conflict of duties by reconciling the two-fold nature of soul as life-giving and contemplative.

This is the general framework within which important traditional philosophical issues are encountered, discussed and resolved, but always in a spirit of inquiry and ongoing debate. Issues are frequently encountered in several different contexts, each angle providing a different insight. The nature of the soul and its relationship to the body is examined at length (IV) using the Aristotelian distinctions of levels of soul (vegetative, growth, sensitive, rational) whilst maintaining the immortal nature of the transcendent soul in Platonic terms. The active nature of the soul in sense-perception is maintained to preserve the principle that incorporeals cannot be affected by corporeal reality. A vigorous discussion (VI.4 and 5) on the general nature of the relationship of incorporeals to body explores in every detail and in great depth the way in which incorporeals act on body. A universe that is the product of design is reconciled with the freedom of the individual. And, not least, the time-bound nature of the physical universe and human reason is grounded in the life of Intellect, which

subsists in eternity. Sometimes, however, Plotinus seems to break outside the framework of traditional metaphysics: the nature of matter and the One, each as non-being, though in a different sense, strains the terminology and structure of traditional ontology; and the attempt to reconcile the role of the individual soul within the traditional Platonic distinction of transcendent and immanent reality leads to a novel exploration of the nature of the self, the "I."

It is this restless urge for exploration and inquiry that lends to the treatises of Plotinus their philosophical vitality. Whilst presenting us with a rich and complexly coherent system, he constantly engages us in philosophical inquiry. In this way each treatise presents us with new ideas and fresh challenges. And, for Plotinus, every philosophical engagement is not just a mental exercise but also contributes to the rediscovery of the self and our reintegration with the source of all being, the Platonic aim of "becoming like god."

While Plotinus, like Plato, always wishes to engage his audience to reflect for themselves, his treatises are not easy reading, partly no doubt because his own audience was already familiar with many of his basic ideas and, more importantly, had been exposed in his seminars to critical readings of philosophical texts that have not survived to our day. Another problem is that the treatises do not lay out his thought in a systematic way but take up specific issues, although always the whole system may be discerned in the

background. Sometimes, too, the exact flow of thought is difficult to follow because of an often condensed mode of expression.

Because we are convinced that Plotinus has something to say to us today, we have launched this series of translations and commentaries as a means of opening up the text to readers with an interest in grappling with the philosophical issues revealed by an encounter with Plotinus' own words and arguments. Each volume will contain a new translation, careful summaries of the arguments and structure of the treatise, and a philosophical commentary that will aim to throw light on the philosophical meaning and import of the text.

John M. Dillon
Andrew Smith

Abbreviations

Armstrong	Armstrong, Arthur Hilary. 1966–1982. *Plotinus*. Greek Text with English Translation and Introductions. Cambridge (MA): Loeb.
Bréhier	Bréhier, Émile. 1924–1938. *Plotin*, *Ennéades*. Greek Text and French Translation with Introductions and Notes. Paris: Les Belles Lettres.
Cilento	Cilento, Vincenzo. 1947–1949. *Plotino*, *Enneadi*. Italian Translation and Commentary. Bari: Laterza.
Creuzer	Creuzer, Georg Friedrich. 1835. *Plotini Enneades*. Greek Text, with Marsilio Ficino's Latin Translation and Commentary. Oxford: E Typographeo Academico.
HBT	Harder, Richard; Beutler, Rudolf and Theiler, Willy 1956–1970. *Plotins Schriften* I–VI. Hamburg: Felix Meiner.

HS_1	Henry, Paul and Schwyzer, Hans-Rudolph. 1951–1973. *Plotini Opera* I–III (editio maior). Paris: Desclée de Brouwer et Cie.
HS_2	Henry, Paul and Schwyzer, Hans-Rudolph. 1964–1982. *Plotini Opera* I–III (editio minor, with revised text). Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Kirchhoff	Kirchhoff, Adolph. 1856. *Plotini Opera*. Leipzig: Teubner.
LS	Long, Anthony A., Sedley David N. 1987. *The Hellenistic Philosophers*, *Volume 1: Translation of the Principal Sources*, *with Philosophical Commentary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
PVP	*Porphyre*, *Vie de Plotin*, edd. L Brisson et al., Paris: Vrin, 1982–1992.
SVF	Von Arnim, Hans, ed.1905. *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*. Leipzig: Teubner.

Preface and Acknowledgments

This translation of, and commentary on, IV.3–4.29 is a cooperative effort of Henry Blumenthal and myself, which arose as follows. For many years, Blumenthal, who is widely acknowledged as the major authority on Plotinus' doctrine of the soul, certainly in the anglophone world, had been working on a commentary on Plotinus' central treatment of this topic, *Ennead* IV.3–5, *Problems of the Soul.* At the time of his much-lamented death in April 1998, however, this project was still incomplete, and his widow Anna (who, sadly, herself passed away in September 2012) bequeathed to me a briefcase containing what there was of the project, to deal with as I saw fit. This turned out to contain a complete translation of the treatise, together with notes on IV.3.1–26 and 31–4.2, rather more than half of the total. These notes, while always of high quality, were not always entirely "user-friendly," or in the format required for the present series, so that a certain amount of work was required to bring them into due order. Nonetheless, the presence of this substantial body of work constituted a vital

impetus to my own effort to do justice to this extremely demanding section of Plotinus' *oeuvre*, and I am therefore happy to share the title page with my old friend. Blumenthal himself, it must be noted, despite his expertise in this area of scholarship, did not believe in the immortality of the soul, and, as I had occasion to remark in the course of an encomium of him at his memorial service in Liverpool in November 1998, I hope that he is now looking down from his perch in the intelligible world, and feeling rather foolish. I also now hope that he approves, at least to some extent, of the final form of this work.

It was originally proposed that the whole of this treatise, which comprises the three tractates (IV.3, IV.4, and IV.5) into which Porphyry chose to divide it, should be edited together, by Professor Gary Gurtler of Boston College and myself, but on reflection, in view of the extensiveness of the commentary required, it has seemed better to divide it into two volumes, with Professor Gurtler as the sole editor of the latter portion. A reasonable point of division seems to occur at IV.4.29, where in fact an ancient note in the manuscripts records that Porphyry's colleague (and predecessor as editor of Plotinus' works) Eustochius, ended the second book of his division of the treatise—presumably regarding IV.30–45, like IV.5, as a sort of appendix to the main body of the work, as indeed it can be viewed as being. We trust that this will not cause too much inconvenience to the readership, and indeed

that it will lead to a greater appreciation of these last two segments than might otherwise be the case.

Besides my great debt to Henry Blumenthal (not only to his notes on the present work, but also to his other works, particularly *Plotinus' Psychology: His Doctrines of the Embodied Soul*, and various articles listed in the Bibliography), I have been much indebted also to the most useful French translation with notes produced in 2005 by Luc Brisson, as Volume 4 of the complete translation of Plotinus which he has edited with J-F. Pradeau (see Bibliography). I have been repeatedly grateful for his acute discussion of points of interest. Also most helpful have been the notes of A. H. Armstrong, in his Loeb Classical Library edition (as of course has been his very fine translation), and to a lesser extent the (largely textual and philological) notes of Willy Theiler in the German edition of Harder, Beutler and Theiler. On the first segment of the treatise (IV.3.1–8), on the topic of the relation of individual souls to the World Soul, I have derived much benefit from the commentary of W. Helleman-Elgersma, 1980, *Soul-Sisters: A Commentary on ENNEADS IV 3 (27), 1–8 of Plotinus* (1980), and on the segment IV.3.25–IV.4.5, concerning the complexities of Plotinus' doctrine of memory, from that of the monograph of Richard King, *Aristotle and Plotinus on Memory* (2009). All scholarship is to some extent a construct on the basis of the achievements of others, and this is no exception.

I only hope that I have avoided any serious distortion of their contributions.

I am also most grateful to my co-editor Andrew Smith for many useful comments, and to our editors at Parmenides Press, Sara Hermann, Gale Carr and Eliza Tutellier, for their most efficient and thoughtful processing of the manuscript.

Introduction to the Treatise

1. Nature and Structure of the Tractate

The tractate entitled by Porphyry "Problems concerning the Soul" (*Peri psykhês aporiai*), and divided by him into three sections of his enneadic system—or, more accurately, into two main sections and a sort of appendix, devoted specifically to his theory of vision—constitutes one of Plotinus' major contributions to philosophy, situated as it is, both thematically and chronologically, at the virtual center of his oeuvre. As he remarks himself at the outset (IV.3.1, 4–12):

"On what subject, after all, would one more reasonably spend one's time in prolonged discussion and investigation than on this one?

There are many reasons for this, but particularly that it provides knowledge about both those things of which it is the principle, and those from which it itself derives. In conducting this enquiry, indeed, we should be obeying the injunction of the god when he enjoins us to 'know

ourselves.' Since we want to investigate and find out about the rest of things, it is right that we should investigate what this thing is that does the investigating, longing as we do to lay hold of the desired object of contemplation, which is Intellect."

The soul is indeed the linchpin of the Platonic universe, conveying downward, to the material realm, unity from the One and creative principles (*logoi*) from Intellect, and facilitating also the upward impulses of individual human souls, as they seek both to "know themselves" and to attain union with the intelligible world.

The treatise—really a sequence of allied enquiries—numbered 27–29 in Porphyry's chronological table, is situated, as remarked above, virtually at the mid-point of the fifty-four treatises that Porphyry lists. In all probability, it is the product of the earlier part of the period when Porphyry was associated with Plotinus (263–268 AD), perhaps around 265. At any rate, it probably has some relationship with an incident that Porphyry relates, involving himself, to illustrate Plotinus' pedagogical method (*Life of Plotinus*, ch. 13):

"He was always as ready to entertain objections as he was powerful in meeting them. At one time I myself kept interrogating him during three days as to how the soul is associated with the body, and he continued explaining. A man called Thaumasius entered in the midst of our discussions. The visitor was more interested in the general drift

of the system than in particular points, and said he wished to hear Plotinus expounding some theory as he would in a set treatise, but that he could not endure Porphyry's questions and the answers to them. Whereat Plotinus said to him: 'But if we cannot first solve the difficulties Porphyry raises, what could go into the treatise?'" (trans. MacKenna, slightly emended)

Very much the questions that Porphyry was raising could be seen as being answered in the second and third *aporiai* of the present treatise (chs. 9–18 and 19–24), which might suggest that they were composed not too long after the incident recounted above, which in turn probably took place in the first year or so after Porphyry's arrival.

The treatise itself is arranged in a series of eight *aporiai*, or "problems,"[1] covering between them all of the outstanding issues relative to the human soul, in particular in its relation to the body, and to the passions and sensations arising from that association, but also its relation to

1 The present volume includes only the first five (IV.3–IV.4.29), leaving the last three (which can each be viewed as to some extent appendices to the main enquiry—he actually speaks of them as "incidental questions," *parapeptôkota*, IV.4.30, 8) to a companion volume: Problem VI (IV.4.30–39) concerns "Prayer, Magic and the Operations of the Stars" and Problem VII (IV.4.40–45): "The Place of Magic in the Living Universe," questions arising from the discussion of whether the heavenly bodies can be said to have memory (broached in IV.4.6–8); while Problem VIII: "The Nature of Vision," arises from an issue raised in IV.4.23, and explicitly anticipated at ll. 42–48 of that chapter.

Soul as a whole, and to the World Soul. It is indeed this last issue, logically enough, with which the treatise opens, and the following problems observe a broadly logical sequence, though with some unexpected twists, as we shall see.

First, then, after a brief introduction, Plotinus takes on the issue of the relations of World Soul and individual soul (ch. 1, 16–ch. 8, 60): "Now however, let us turn once again[2] to the argument against those who say that our souls are derived from the soul of the universe." Next (chs. 9–18), since this is the feature that serves most basically to distinguish individual souls from the World Soul, he raises the issue of the descent of the soul into embodiment: "But we must investigate also how soul comes to be in body. What is the manner of its presence?" The third problem (chs. 19–23, which could indeed be seen as an appendix to the second) focuses on the second part of this question: "What is the *manner* of its presence (*tis ho tropos*)?" This leads to a close examination of in just what sense the soul can be said to be *in* the body, culminating in the suggestion (chs. 22–23) that the soul is in the body rather as light is in air—though in fact the body is better regarded as being *in* the soul.

We might now expect an enquiry into the various functions of the soul in the body (which does indeed follow in due course), but instead Plotinus chooses (chs.

2 A reference, perhaps, to such an earlier treatment as that in IV.9, with which he would no longer be quite satisfied.

24–4.17) to turn to the question of what individuating characteristics the soul might retain after its departure from a particular embodiment, and this in turn raises the problem of the persistence of memory, as a key element of personal identity, after the separation of soul from body in death; which in turn leads to an enquiry into what levels of being can properly be supposed to possess memory. Only now (4.18–29) does Plotinus turn to a closer consideration of the proper subject of sensations and emotions, identified as the lower projection, the "trace" or "shadow" of soul, which combines with the life-force emanating from the World Soul to comprise the living, sensory body.

This, as will be observed, is a large and comprehensive program. It is the culmination of many years of previous speculation, and it sets the agenda for many further explorations, but essentially the parameters of Plotinus' psychology are now fixed.

2. The Doctrine of Soul in the Treatise

a. Soul the Hypostasis

It is basic to Plotinus' mature theory of the soul that there exists, as a primary emanation or projection of the hypostasis Intellect, a level of being characterized, in contrast to Intellect, by spatiality and temporality, though not itself involved directly with corporeality—the hypostasis Soul. Its development from Intellect is sometimes presented by Plotinus (e.g. in *Ennead* V.1.1) as a "fall" or

"deviation," but this is merely figurative language; in reality, Soul constitutes an essential stage in the development of the universe, as being the bridge, or conduit, between the higher realities, the One and Intellect, and the three-dimensionality—or indeed four-dimensionality, if we include the temporal dimension—of the physical world.

We find a succinct statement of Plotinus' basic view of the nature of the soul, and its role in the universe, in a passage of the early work *On the Immortality of the Soul* IV.7 [2] 9:

"But the other nature (sc. Soul), which has being of itself, is all that really exists, which does not come into being or perish: or everything else will pass away, and could not come into being afterwards if this real existence had perished which preserves all other things, and especially this All, which is preserved and given its universal order and beauty by Soul. For Soul is 'the origin of motion' (*Phaedrus* 245c9) and is responsible for the motion of other things, and it is moved by itself, and gives life to the ensouled body, but has it of itself, and never loses it because it has it of itself." (9, 1–10, trans. Armstrong)

Here Soul's chief role is set out, as the source of all movement, and thus of life. Its role in generating both time and space has been mentioned already. The generation of time as the life of Soul is set out in particular in *Ennead* III.7 | 11–12. In an unusually eloquent passage, where he has just renounced the idea of calling on the Muses to tell

"how time first came out" (since it was really before their time!) Plotinus continues:

"But one might perhaps (even if the Muses did exist then after all) ask Time itself, when it has come into being, to tell us how it did come into being and appear. It might say something like this about itself: that before, when it had not yet, in fact, produced 'before' or felt the need for the 'after,' it was at rest with eternity in real being; it was not yet time, but itself, too, kept quiet in that. But since there was a restlessly active nature which wanted to control itself and be on its own, and chose to seek for more than its present state, this moved, and time moved with it."

Soul's relation with time becomes an issue in IV.4.15, in connection with memory, and its appropriateness to pure Soul. Here we find Plotinus making an interesting and subtle distinction: Soul as hypostasis may generate time, but it is not *in* time; in fact, it comprehends it holistically (to borrow an overworked contemporary term); so it is not appropriate that memory should be attributed to it. This highlights an issue adverted to acutely by Henry Blumenthal in his article "*Nous* and Soul in Plotinus: Some Problems of Demarcation" [1974], where he draws attention to the rather fuzzy distinction that Plotinus in fact makes between Intellect and Soul in its highest aspect. This fuzziness can be illustrated rather well from an earlier section of the discussion of memory in this treatise (4.9–10), where the figure of Zeus, which elsewhere in Plotinus represents

the World Soul, can be taken as standing in for both the lowest aspect of Intellect and the highest aspect of Soul, both of which can be characterized as "demiurgic."

Such a level of soul is here firmly to be distinguished from the actual soul of the world, which must be viewed as an individual soul like any other, except for the very special nature of its chosen body (viz., the whole physical universe), and its very distinctive relationship to that body.

b. The World Soul

An important innovation that seems to be due to Plotinus himself, as his thought developed, is the establishing of a distinction between the hypostasis Soul and a soul of the cosmos, or world. In his mind, this was designed to clarify certain obscurities that seemed to him to be attendant upon Plato's concept of a World Soul, particularly as set out in the *Timaeus*. There is really no sign of such a distinction in previous periods of Platonism, or even in Plotinus' own earlier works. The following passage, from *Ennead* III.9—a collection of short pieces which Porphyry has put together as no. 13 of his edition—is representative of his earlier views (he is contrasting the non-descended nature of the All-Soul with the descents into body that individual souls must undergo:

"Universal Soul (*hê pasa psychê*) did not come to be anywhere or come to any place, for there was no place; but the body (sc. of the world) came near to it and participated

in it; for this reason Plato, too, does not say anywhere that it is in the body, but that the body was put into it (cf. *Timaeus* 39de). But the other souls have somewhere they come from—for they come from Soul—and somewhere to go to, and a going down and a going about; consequently also a going up. But Soul is always above, where it is natural for it to be; that which comes next to it (*ephexês*) is the universe (*to pan*), both the immediately neighboring part and that which is beneath the sun." (III.9.3, 1–8, trans. Armstrong)

One may look also at the still earlier treatise IV.8 [6], particularly chs. 4, 7, and 8, to find the same simple contrast between the All-Soul (here *hê holê psychê*) and individual souls, together with a lack of worry as to exactly how the individual souls relate to the All-Soul. The All-Soul, in turn, has a somehow non-compromising relationship with the body of the universe—as indeed portrayed in the *Timaeus*: the universe comes to it, is "in" it, or adjacent to it, and is administered without any concern needing to be focused upon it.

This scenario, however, plainly came to seem to Plotinus to present an inadequate picture of the complexity of the relationship between Soul, the individual souls, and the universe. On the one hand, he came to feel that Soul itself, the hypostasis, should not descend at all, and thus should not be the soul *of* anything, viz., the universe, or world; while on the other hand, he was far from satisfied

with any facile portrayal of the individual soul as a *part* of the All-Soul, despite their undeniable connection. These problems with the inherited tradition seem to come to a head in this treatise, with most interesting results.

First of all, it seems to him necessary to postulate, as well as the multitude of individual souls (which include, as well as individual human souls, those of daemons and other intermediary beings, and of the heavenly bodies), a soul for the world as a whole, distinct from the hypostasis, which counts as another individual soul, albeit of a most exalted kind, and thus our "older sister" (cf. II.9.18, 14–17), rather than, as one might put it, our mother. This development, however, took some time to establish itself firmly in his mind. Even in the first segment of the present treatise (3.1–8), we may note, a certain degree of vagueness persists as to whether we are talking of an old-style comprehensive World Soul or not—mainly because his opponents in this argument, whoever they were (see discussion *ad loc.*), were themselves working with such a concept. From this time on, however, a World Soul must be clearly distinguished in his thought from the hypostasis Soul.

The other issue that gave him trouble in this area was the unity of all souls, or the extent to which our souls are *parts* of an All-Soul. In the early treatises IV.2 [4]: "On the Essence of the Soul," and IV.9 [8]: "Whether All Souls are One," he seems less troubled about asserting their basic unity; but when we get to the first segment of

the present treatise, the precise sense in which this is true has become a problem. While he remains convinced that in some sense our souls are all one, and all united in the All-Soul, he is concerned to eliminate a series of what he sees as simple-minded ways in which our souls might be regarded as "parts." What he settles for, rather cautiously (cf. 3.2, 50ff.), is the analogy of a whole science with the individual theorems of which it is made up; the theorems have an individual coherence of their own, though each of them encapsulates potentially the whole of the science in question. His concern seems to be to preserve the individual identity of each human soul. One of his more distinctive doctrines (first stated in the early treatise IV.8.8) is that a part of each of our souls remains "above"—by which he means, not in the All-Soul, but rather in the intelligible realm, so that in effect there is a Form of each of us—not, however, of each of our individual bodily *instantiations*, but rather of the immortal soul that currently inhabits each of us, and which will, of course, be, and has been, instantiated an infinite number of times. That is the true sense of his curious theory of "Forms of Individuals," as expounded in *Enn.* V.7 [18], which has caused so much unnecessary dispute among scholars. The "individuals" concerned are not individuals in the Platonically offensive sense of instances of Forms; rather, there is a Form that instantiates itself as, say, Socrates, and *consecutively* as an infinite series of others, just as there is a Form that instantiates itself

both simultaneously and consecutively in an infinite number of sheep or goats. This is a crucial reason why our souls cannot just be *parts* of an All-Soul, and why we each retain a connection with the intelligible realm—even if for the great majority it is never activated.

At any rate, this treatise sees a considerable advance in the sophistication of his approach to these questions, and largely fixes his thought on the subject for the remainder of his philosophical career.

c. Structure of the Individual Soul

The true nature of Plotinus' theory as regards the structure of the individual soul is obscured by the fact that, as a faithful Platonist, he is concerned to maintain at least the outward appearance of allegiance to the tripartite soul of the *Republic*, Book IV, as well as the rather different schemes of the *Phaedrus* and the *Timaeus*, where the tripartition of the rational (*logistikon*), spirited (*thymoeides*) and appetitive (*epithymêtikon*) "parts" seems overlaid by a bipartite structure opposing reason with the various irrational psychic drives, portrayed in the myth of the *Phaedrus* as *horses* (246ab)—albeit one better behaved than the other—as distinct from a human charioteer, and characterized in the *Timaeus* as the "mortal" parts of the soul (69d).

All this, however, viewed as a thoroughly coherent doctrine, is officially accepted by Plotinus, as it was by

his Platonist predecessors, but by him it is transformed in practice, in the present treatise into something quite else.[3] In his first discussion of the relation of soul with body, at 3, chs. 22–23, admittedly, he does not appear to be straying too far from a traditional Platonist position, but when he returns to the question at 4, chs. 18–21, and again at chs. 28–29, the situation is revealed as being much more complicated. One principle Plotinus is increasingly concerned to assert, and which he lays out with particular clarity in the treatise just prior to this one, *Enn.* III.6 [26], *On the Impassibility of Incorporeals* (specifically in chs. 1–5), is that soul in the strict sense cannot be considered as being subject to passions (*pathê*), that is to say that it cannot be affected or modified in any of the ways to which a body would be subject. The consequence of this—since undeniably sensations and passions are experienced by something, and that something cannot be a purely material object that can have no experiences—is that we must postulate some

3 For other passages in which he presents creative adaptations of the Platonist tripartite schema one may consult e.g. II.9 [33] 2 and V.3 [49] 3. Indeed, one could discern in Plotinus' thought a rather different sort of tripartition, involving (a) the (undescended) higher intellect, (b) the practical reason (*to logizomenon*), which judges the data presented by the lower soul; and (c) the sense-perceptive soul (*aisthêtikê psykhê*), which does not itself suffer *pathê*, but takes cognizance of the data emanating from the "shadow" of soul, or living body. The Platonic *thymos* is relegated to this latter level, as we shall see in IV.4.28–29.

third thing, not properly soul and not simply body, which can be the subject of such phenomena.

Plotinus' solution to this problem seems to involve, as in a number of other cases, a creative appropriation of certain doctrines of Aristotle, in this case his views of the functioning of the soul (as "the primal actualization of a physical body which possesses life," *On the Soul* II 1, 412a28–29).[4] Aristotle did not, of course, accept the concept of a separable immaterial soul, but for Plotinus' purposes his system of psychic faculties constitutes a useful base for his own theory. The scenario that Plotinus postulates is, first, a sort of "preliminary sketch" (*prohypographê*) of the human soul, as it is described in the later treatise VI.7 [38] 7, provided by the World Soul, as part of its lower aspect, Nature (*physis*), to all living things, which transforms the material mass of their bodies into living organisms—this corresponding more or less to Aristotle's "nutritive faculty" (discussed, briefly, in *On the Soul* II 4, 415a14ff.). Onto this, however, Plotinus proposes to graft, from "above," so to speak, a sort of projection or illumination of the soul proper, for which he likes to use the terms "shadow" (*skia*),

4 We may note, in this connection, that Plotinus appears to reject the postulate (with which he must have been familiar, as it was reasonably popular already in second-century Platonism) of the "pneumatic vehicle"—normally conceived to be composed of aether—that could serve as a sort of "cushion" or conduit between soul and body. This failed to satisfy him, perhaps, because it is already a kind of material entity.

"trace" (*ikhnos*, *indalma*),[5] or "illumination" (*ellampsis*); this would correspond more closely to Aristotle's sensitive faculty (*aisthêtikon*), which is discussed, at some length, for the rest of Book II (chs. 5–12), and the first two chapters of Book III. The passage merits quotation:

"For what is there to prevent the power of the Soul of the Universe (*hê tou pantos psykhê*) from drawing a preliminary outline (*prohypographein*), since it is the universal forming principle (*logos*) even before the soul-powers come from it, and this preliminary outline (*prohypographê*) being like illuminations (*ellampseis*) running on before into matter, and the soul which carries out the work following traces (*ikhnê*) of this kind, and making by articulating the traces part by part, and each individual soul becoming this to which it came by assuming to itself a shape, as the dancer does to the dramatic part given to him." (VI.7.7, 13ff., trans. Armstrong, slightly altered)

5 It is very possible that Plotinus derived some stimulus to his concept of *ikhnos* from the passage in the *Timaeus* (53b) on the "traces" (*ikhnê*) of the four elements present in the Receptacle before order is imposed upon it by the Demiurge, as these "traces" are not the elements themselves, though bearing some resemblance to, and dependence on, them. (It is indeed difficult, in fact, to imagine what Plato envisaged them as being.)
The concept of the *ikhnos*, we may note, appears already in the somewhat earlier treatise VI.4–5 [22–23], cf., VI.4.15, 15ff. The *ikhnos* is there described as "not a part of it [sc. the soul], but something like a heating (*thermasia*) or illumination (*ellampsis*) coming from it," a description that may in turn be compared to IV.4.18.

Here we have two of Plotinus' favorite terms for the lower projection of the soul, *ellampsis* and *ikhnos*, employed to characterize what is in fact a sort of preliminary ensouling of the living body provided by the World Soul, into which the individual soul can insert itself, a process for which Plotinus utilizes an image that he finds attractive in other contexts also, that of the actor, or artistic performer, fitting himself into a preordained role.

It is this rather curious amalgam, then, that would seem to be Plotinus' preferred candidate as the proper subject of passions and sensations. In the present tractate, however, and in particular in the course of the fifth *aporia* (4.18–29) he is inclined to downplay the contribution from Nature, but both elements are nonetheless there. A good passage to illustrate this comes from ch. 18:

"Now for the question whether the body possesses anything on its own account, and brings some distinctive quality of its own to the life bestowed on it by the presence of soul, or whether what it has is simply nature (*physis*), and this is what it is that associates with the body—*nature*.

The answer is that the body itself, in which there is soul and nature, must not be the same kind of thing as what is soulless, or that air is when it has been lit, but rather like air that has been warmed: the body of an animal, or indeed of a plant, has something like a shadow (*skia*) of soul, and pain and taking pleasure in the pleasures of the body is the business of the body so-qualified (*to toionde sôma*); but

the pain of this body and this sort of pleasure come to the notice of our self (*hémeis*) for dispassionate cognition (*eis gnôsin apathê erkhetai*). By 'our self' I mean the rest of the soul, in so far as even the body so-qualified is not another's, but belongs to us; wherefore it is of concern to us, as belonging to us. For we are not this, nor yet have we been purged of it, but it depends on us and is suspended from us, whereas we exist in respect of our chief part (*kata to kyrion*), but nevertheless that other entity is ours, though in a different way. Therefore it is of concern to us (*melei)* when it is experiencing pleasure and pain, and the more so the weaker we are, and to the extent that we do not separate ourselves from it, but hold this part of us to be the most valuable, and take it as the true man, and, as it were, submerge ourselves into it." (18, 1–19, my trans.)

Here Plotinus is concerned to make a firm distinction between what is "us," and what is merely "ours,"[6] the former being the soul proper, and the latter being the ensouled body, or the "body so-qualified," just below, and elsewhere (e.g. in *Enn*. I.1 [53] 5–7), termed "the commonality" (*to koinon*) or "the composite" (*to synamphoteron*). The soul proper, the "we" (*hêmeis*), has "concern" for the composite, but this concern it has involves a "dispassionate cognition" (*gnosis apathês*). *Pathê* belong to the composite, and that is

6 Cf. a similar distinction in the later treatise V.3 [49] 2–3.

administered immediately by this lower "trace" of soul, which may be termed *physis*.

It is from this entity that passions and sensations are passed on to the lower aspect of the soul proper, which Plotinus terms the "sense-perceptive soul" (*aisthêtikê psykhê*), though, as he wishes to emphasize, its perception of the data in question is no longer a *pathos*, but rather a dispassionate cognizing. The data, thus transformed, are then passed on "upward" to the reason, or *logistikon*, via the imaging faculty, or *phantasia*, for judgment, and if approved, storage in the memory (*mnêmê*), and, if appropriate, action. Impulses (*orexeis*)—in the sense of instinctive urges—may be generated by the ensouled body, but an impulse that results in considered action is the province of the rational soul.

This is certainly a complex and multi-layered model of psychic (and sub-psychic) activity, but it seemed to Plotinus necessary to explain the phenomena, and to preserve the soul proper from contamination by *pathê*, while leaving it free to act. Even this is not the end of the story, since he also believed in a "super-soul," as it were, that never descends from the intelligible realm, and which he plainly felt that he was able to access on occasion (cf. the beginning of *Enn.* IV.8, and ch. 8 of that treatise); this level of soul, however, is not really touched on in the present treatise.

d. Some Special Issues

i. Astral Bodies

As noted above, Plotinus did not have much use for the postulation of the "pneumatic vehicle" as a mechanism for linking the soul with the body, but he does not reject the idea of aetherial bodies or integuments as "vehicles" for souls while in the universe, but not yet assigned to a material body—nor indeed could he very well do so, in view of the description in the *Timaeus* (41de), where the Demiurge, "mounting the souls each on a star, as on vehicles (*okhêmata*), showed them the nature of the universe and told them the laws of their destiny."

We may take note of two passages from the second *aporia* as to the mode of the soul's entry into body (3.9–18), in which Plotinus, following Plato's lead, accepts the existence of astral bodies; these bodies, however, though necessary for the soul's primal accommodation to life in the physical cosmos, are to be discarded upon entry into the soul's earthy body. The relevant passages are as follows:

"But we must investigate also how soul comes to be in body. What is the manner of its presence? For this is no less worthy of wonder and investigation. Now since the ways in which the soul enters a body are two—for one happens to a soul which is in a body, either a soul that is changing bodies or one that is coming to an earthy body from an airy or fiery one, which they do not call changing bodies because the starting point of the entrance is

not clear; while the other is when the soul comes to any body whatsoever from a disembodied state, which would constitute the soul's first participation in body—it would be right for us to investigate this latter case, asking whatever it is that happens when the soul, having been entirely uncontaminated with body, takes upon itself a bodily nature." (9, 1–13)

Plotinus' primary concern here, as he makes clear, is to enquire into the initial entry of soul into any body whatsoever, but in the process he mentions, merely to set it aside, the secondary way in which a soul can be said to enter a body, that is from an astral body into an earthy one.

The astral body comes up again, however, somewhat later on, at the beginning of chapter 15:

"The souls proceed, then, peering out (*ekkypsasai*) from the intelligible realm, in the first instance to the heavens, and, taking on a body there, they then pass by means of it to more earthy bodies, to the degree to which they are extended in length. Some go from the heavens to the lower level of bodies, while others are inserted from some bodies into others, those, that is, whose power was not adequate to raise them from here because of the heaviness laid upon them, and the consequent forgetfulness, since they drag about with them a lot that was loaded onto them to weigh them down." (15, 1–8)

Here he is prepared to envisage, not only astral bodies proper, but more polluted versions of them (borrowed

from a notable passage of the *Phaedo* 81cd), which form, for instance, the wraith-like bodies of ghosts. The exact composition of such "weighed-down" bodies is rather more of a problem for Plotinus than it appears to have been for Plato, but he is prepared, it seems, to recognize their existence. In neither of these passages, however, are we confronted with a "pneumatic vehicle" in the strict sense. These bodies are material vehicles serving as bodies for souls; they are not intermediate entities between soul and body as such. Plotinus, then, has no objection to postulating astral or pneumatic bodies of various sorts, to service the soul while it is between earthy bodies, but still within the physical cosmos; he just does not find them useful as a solution to the soul-body problem.

ii. Imagination and Memory

As noted above, the faculty of memory has the importance for Plotinus that it seemed to him that, without the postulation of at least some form of it, there could not be any meaningful survival of personal identity after death and between incarnations. What interests him in the long segment of the treatise devoted to the discussion of memory (3.25–4.17) is, first of all, to what levels of being the possession of memory is appropriate, viz., not to levels of being that are not involved in temporality, and thus a sense of "pastness"; and then how the faculty of memory operates in relation not only to what is "below" it, viz.,

sense-perceptions, but also to what is "above" it, viz., the level of discursive intellect. We remember, after all, not only past passions and sense-experiences, but also past intellectual experiences, such as scientific discoveries or philosophical and aesthetic insights. In an interesting passage, comprising chapters 3.30–31, Plotinus ventures to put forward a theory of double faculties of imagination and of memory, the distinct nature of which is obscured while we are in the body, but only the higher of which can be assumed to survive the separation of soul from body in death. His speculations in that connection are most interesting, and exhibit an acute understanding of what would constitute continuity of the personality, an issue that does not seem to have bothered his predecessors, from Plato onward, much, if at all, while his attempt at a solution did not commend itself to his successors.[7]

7 I have derived much enlightenment from the extended discussion of Plotinus' theory of memory by Richard King, in ch. 3 of his [2009], which I only came upon at a late stage of the composition of this commentary. There is little of what he says with which I would disagree, except that he seems to wish to identify the memory of intellectual experiences with Platonic "recollection" (*anamnesis*) of the Forms, which I do not think is what Plotinus has in mind here.

Note on the Text

LINE NUMBERS IN THE TRANSLATION are approximate and do not always match the original Greek text. Since the commentary follows the sequence of the English translation, there may sometimes be a slight discrepancy in the ordering.

The Greek text adopted is that of the Oxford edition (taking into account the Addenda ad Textum in vol. 3, 304–325). Deviations from the text are noted in the commentary. Each *Ennead* is referred to by Roman numerals, followed by the number of the treatise, the chapter of the treatise, and, finally, separated by a comma, the line number or numbers, e.g, V.1.3, 24–27.

It is customary to add the chronological number given by Porphyry in his *Life of Plotinus* (*Vita Plotini*), so that, for example, V.1 is designated V.1 [10]. In this series the chronological number is given only where it is of significance for Plotinus' philosophical stance. The following chart indicates the chronological order.

Chronological Order of the *Enneads*

Enn.		*Enn.*		*Enn.*		*Enn.*		*Enn.*		*Enn.*	
I.1	**53**	II.1	**40**	III.1	**3**	IV.1	**21**	V.1	**10**	VI.1	**42**
I.2	**19**	II.2	**14**	III.2	**47**	IV.2	**4**	V.2	**11**	VI.2	**43**
I.3	**20**	II.3	**52**	III.3	**48**	IV.3	**27**	V.3	**49**	VI.3	**44**
I.4	**46**	II.4	**12**	III.4	**15**	IV.4	**28**	V.4	**7**	VI.4	**22**
I.5	**36**	II.5	**25**	III.5	**50**	IV.5	**29**	V.5	**32**	VI.5	**23**
I.6	**1**	II.6	**17**	III.6	**26**	IV.6	**41**	V.6	**24**	VI.6	**34**
I.7	**54**	II.7	**37**	III.7	**45**	IV.7	**2**	V.7	**18**	VI.7	**38**
I.8	**51**	II.8	**35**	III.8	**30**	IV.8	**6**	V.8	**31**	VI.8	**39**
I.9	**16**	II.9	**33**	III.9	**13**	IV.9	**8**	V.9	**5**	VI.9	**9**

	Enn.		*Enn.*		*Enn.*		*Enn.*		*Enn.*		*Enn.*
1	I.6	**10**	V.1	**19**	I.2	**28**	IV.4	**37**	II.7	**46**	I.4
2	IV.7	**11**	V.2	**20**	I.3	**29**	IV.5	**38**	VI.7	**47**	III.2
3	III.1	**12**	II.4	**21**	IV.1	**30**	III.8	**39**	VI.8	**48**	III.3
4	IV.2	**13**	III.9	**22**	VI.4	**31**	V.8	**40**	II.1	**49**	V.3
5	V.9	**14**	II.2	**23**	VI.5	**32**	V.5	**41**	IV.6	**50**	III.5
6	IV.8	**15**	III.4	**24**	V.6	**33**	II.9	**42**	VI.1	**51**	I.8
7	V.4	**16**	I.9	**25**	II.5	**34**	VI.6	**43**	VI.2	**52**	II.3
8	IV.9	**17**	II.6	**26**	III.6	**35**	II.8	**44**	VI.3	**53**	I.1
9	VI.9	**18**	V.7	**27**	IV.3	**36**	I.5	**45**	III.7	**54**	I.7

Synopsis

Ennead IV.3

Introduction (ch. 1, 1–16)

Chapter 1, 1–16 — A statement of the overall subject matter: the soul, as both subject and object of investigation. The soul is the best, and most important, subject for discussion (4–6), and the key to understanding ourselves.

First Problem: Relation of Individual Souls to All-Soul (chs. 1, 16–8, 60)

The first *aporia*, or problem, namely the relationship of the individual souls to the All-Soul.

Four arguments are set out (ch. 1, 18–37) in favor of the derivation of our souls from the World Soul:

(1) It is insufficient to say that our souls have effects as far-reaching as those of the World Soul; their similarity to it is consistent with their being parts

of it as a whole. Plato is claimed as subscribing to this view (cf. *Phlb.* 30a3–8).

(2) The fact that we follow the rotation of the heavens shows that we have our souls from what contains us (cf. *Tim.* 90c–d).

(3) In proportion as each part of us has a share in our soul, we as parts of it have a share in the World Soul.

(4) To say that all-soul cares for what has no soul (cf. *Phdr.* 246b6) means that there is nothing beyond the reach of the World Soul.

These arguments are refuted, in turn, in chs. 2–8.

Chapter 2 — The first part of Plotinus' reply, directed against the argument in 1, 18–22. Plotinus first takes up the point that our souls are like the World Soul, arguing that this means that they belong to the same genus and so cannot be parts of it, and that both World Soul and individual soul must derive from the same source (2, 1–10). The rest of the chapter examines ways in which incorporeal entities can and cannot be said to be parts of wholes.

Chapters 3–6 — Plotinus now turns to address the third of the arguments set out in chapter 1, and does not return to the "corollary" of the first, which adduces

the *Philebus*, until ch. 7. The core of the argument in ch. 3 is that, since our souls have a unifying center of consciousness, analogous to that which we must assume for the World Soul, they cannot be simply parts of that entity, as the various senses are "parts" of our soul, in that they cannot themselves form synthetic judgments, but must report their findings to a central consciousness.

***Chapter 4* —** Comprises a reply to the objection that, if all souls are one, the soul will be both in body and outside body, if it is true that our souls leave our bodies periodically, and that of the world does not.

***Chapter 5* —** Presents further arguments against the thesis that there are no individual souls because all souls are parts of one.

***Chapter 6* —** Raises the question, Why does the World Soul do different things from the individual souls, and they from each other?

***Chapter 7* —** In this chapter, Plotinus addresses the second, fifth, and third respectively of the arguments set out in Chapter 1. His answers to the objection resolve themselves into a series of alternative exegeses of well-known Platonic passages that have plainly been used by protagonists of the theory that our souls are a part of the All-Soul to buttress their position.

Chapter 8 — Now that Plotinus has offered refutations of the arguments for our souls being parts of the World Soul, he considers some problems arising from his view of their essential identity.

Second Problem: How Soul Comes to be in Body: Differences between World Soul and Other Souls (chs. 9–18)

This section comprises the second *aporia* that Plotinus wishes to raise, viz. the mode of ensoulment both of the world as a whole and of individual bodies. It involves a major statement of his vision of the physical world and of the place of the soul in it.

Chapter 9 — Plotinus here considers two senses in which the soul may be said to enter a body: passing from an aerial or fiery body to one of earth; and the initial entry from a totally bodiless state into body, which is what he proposes to deal with in particular.

Chapter 10 — The function of the World Soul, continued. How soul acts as a mean between the eternal and the temporal, and how it forms the beings subsequent to it.

Chapter 11 — Further discussion of the mode of production of the World Soul.

Chapter 12 — The focus now shifts to individual human souls. The descent of souls is not total, but cyclical, and this process is governed by the World Soul.

Chapter 13 — Further points about the descent of the individual soul; its following of law-like processes.

Chapter 14 — An allegory of the soul's descent: the souls as the adornments of Pandora, representing the physical cosmos.

Chapter 15 — The soul's journey downward, and the causes of differences between souls.

Chapter 16 — An interlude: punishments, justice and evil. Fate and cosmic order.

Chapter 17 — Another way of representing the soul's descent and its relation to both higher reality and to what lies below it.

Chapter 18 — The use of calculation: a symptom of departure from the intelligible.

Third Problem: The Manner of the Soul's Embodiment (chs. 19–23)

The manner of the soul's association with the body. Plotinus now looks again at the nature of the soul, and then proceeds to discuss various ways in which it might be said to be in the body, before offering

his own solutions. This section represents one of the more scholastic parts of the treatise, somewhat comparable to the early work IV.7 [2] 1–8[5].

Chapter 19 — An introductory exegesis of the division of the soul in *Timaeu*s 35a–b.

Chapter 20 — An enquiry into the mode of the soul's presence in the body. Is soul in body as in a place?

Chapter 21 — The mode of the soul's presence in body, continued.

Chapter 22 — Might the soul be in the body as fire or light is in air—or rather, should we say that the body is in the soul?

Chapter 23 — Continuation of the foregoing: a more detailed consideration of how the various faculties interact with the appropriate organs; and a discussion of the relation between the sense of touch and the brain, through the agency of the nerves.

Fourth Problem: The Soul's Departure from the Body: What Does It Remember and How; and to What Level or Levels of Being is Memory Properly Appropriate? (chs. 3, 24–4, 17)

The issue of what happens to the soul after death leads Plotinus to a protracted investigation of the

nature and scope of the faculties of imagination (*phantasia*) and memory (*mnêmê*), since the continuance of these seems above all necessary for the survival of the individual person.

Chapter 24 — The fate of souls after they have left the body; and the punishments awaiting sinful souls.

Chapter 25 — The exercise of memory is inappropriate to the level of intellect, but must belong to a lower level of soul.

Chapter 26 — The consequences of the hypothesis that memory is a function of the compound of body and soul are here examined, leading to the rejection of the hypothesis.

Chapter 27 — Memory belongs properly to the soul.

Chapter 28 — First possibility: Each faculty possesses the memories appropriate to it.

Chapter 29 — Memory cannot be located exclusively within the sense-perceptive faculty, as that would leave no possibility of memory for the disembodied soul. It is better to locate memory in the faculty of imagination.

Chapter 30 — The role of the imagination in remembering thoughts.

Chapter 31 — The consequence of assigning memory to the faculty of imagination is that we must postulate not one, but two such faculties.

Chapter 32 — What the soul remembers at and shortly after its departure from the body.

Ennead IV.4

Chapter 1 — What the soul can be deemed to remember in the intelligible world, or whether memory is appropriate to that plane of existence at all.

Chapter 2 — Further observations on the working of intellect, and of soul when it is in a state of assimilation to it.

Chapter 3 — It is only when the soul falls away from union with Intellect that memory arises.

Chapter 4 — Extension of the concept of memory to cover unconscious memory. This can apply to "potential" memory in the intellectual realm as well as dispositional memory in the sensible realm.

Chapter 5 — The role of memory (a) when the soul is united with the intelligible, and (b) when it is residing at its own, psychic, level.

Chapter 6 — The problem of the souls of the heavenly bodies: is the concept of memory appropriate to them?

Chapter 7 — Further discussion of the status of the celestial souls.

Chapter 8 — Further consideration of the situation of the heavenly souls leads to various interesting reflections on the nature of memory, and in particular the phenomenon of attention or awareness (*synaisthêsis*).

Chapter 9 — The World Soul in its demiurgic role, symbolized here by Zeus. How can it not have memory?

Chapter 10 — The distinction between "Demiurge" and World Soul becomes more marked, as discussion now focuses on whether the World Soul, as opposed to Intellect (or pure Soul?), must be regarded as having consciousness of temporal succession, and thus being endowed with memory. This possibility too Plotinus rejects.

Chapter 11 — Further analysis of the mode of creation and administration of the universe by Soul in its immanent capacity, as Nature.

Chapter 12 — Further on the issue of deliberation and memory on the part of the "wisdom" administering the universe.

Chapter 13 — Comparison and contrast between Intellect and Nature.

Chapter 14 — Further exploration of the mode in which Nature generates the physical world, and in particular living bodies.

Chapter 15 — Temporality as a distinctive feature of Soul, in contrast to the eternity of Intellect, and the consequences of that. Special position of pure Soul.

Chapter 16 — The problem of temporality continued, with special reference to the consciousness of the successiveness of events, which produces the idea of "pastness," and therefore memory.

Chapter 17 — Why it is that the intellections and reasonings of embodied souls are involved in temporal succession, and are not of the same nature as those of the pure Soul.

Fifth Problem: The Joint Activities of Body and Soul (chs. 18–29)

In this section of the work, Plotinus, having surveyed all the higher states and types of soul, under the rubric of investigating the nature of memory, and its proper subject, now turns to the question of the soul's presence in the body, and more specifically, the question of what it is that is the subject

of the emotions, such as pleasure and pain, desire and anger—involving also a protracted digression (chs. 22–27) on the presence or otherwise of sense-perception in the souls of the earth and of the heavenly bodies.

Chapter 18 — The nature of the animate body examined.

Chapter 19 — Further development of the theory of pleasure and pain, and of the proper subject of the emotions.

Chapter 20 — A consideration of the nature and proper seat of desires, in what sense they belong to the animate body, and in what sense to the soul proper.

Chapter 21 — A short appendix to the previous discussion, reinforcing the thesis that desires really belong to the "body so-qualified."

Chapter 22 — Is there anything in the soul of plants corresponding to the distinctions just made within the human soul? And what relation does such a soul have to the soul of the earth as a whole?

Chapter 23 — Can one have sense-perception without the appropriate organs?

Chapter 24 — A return to the issue raised, and postponed, at the end of ch. 22, whether sense-perception has solely utilitarian purposes.

Chapter 25 — Further investigation of the purpose of the earth or heavenly bodies having senses.

Chapter 26 — Further discussion of the possible uses of sensation by the soul of the earth.

Chapter 27 — Conclusion of the digression on the question as to whether the earth possesses sense-perception, and therefore a soul.

Chapter 28 — Return to the main subject of discussion, namely the parts played by body and soul respectively in the desires and passions. Plotinus now turns to an examination of the nature of *thymos*, here rendered "spiritedness," but also frequently translatable as "anger."

Chapter 29 — A return here to the theme opened up in ch. 18: the nature of the union between soul and body, and specifically, the fate of the "trace" of soul in the body after the soul proper has departed in death.

Translation of
Ennead *IV.3–4.29*

Problems concerning the Soul

Introduction (ch. 1, 1–18)

1. Concerning the soul, the right course, I feel, would be to conduct our enquiry in such a way as either to arrive at solutions to the relevant problems, or, if remaining in a state of puzzlement on those points, to regard this at least as a gain, that we know what in this area does not admit of solution. On what subject, after all, 1 would one more reasonably spend one's time in prolonged discussion and investigation than on this one?

There are many reasons for this, but particularly that it provides knowledge about both those things of which it is the principle, and those from which it itself derives. In conducting this enquiry, indeed, we should be obeying the injunction of the god when he enjoins us 1 to "know

ourselves." Since we want to investigate and find out about the rest of things, it is right that we should investigate what this thing is that does the investigating, longing as we do to lay hold of the desired object of contemplation, which is Intellect. For there is a duality, as we know, even in the universal Intellect, and so it is reasonable that in the case of partial instances of it one aspect should take on one role, and another the other. We must also investigate how
15 it is that | we receive the gods; but we shall deal with this when we examine how the soul comes to be in the body.

First Problem: Relation of Individual Souls to All-Soul (ch. 1, 18–8, 60)

Now, however, let us turn once again to the argument against those who say that our souls are derived from the soul of the universe.

They will perhaps deny that the facts that our souls
20 exhibit the same scope | as does the soul of the universe, and that they are equally endowed with intellect (even if they concede such equality), are sufficient arguments against their being parts; for they would maintain that parts can be of like kind to their wholes. And they will adduce here the doctrine of Plato,[8] when, in seeking to support the argument that the universe is ensouled, he asserts that,

8 Sc. *Phlb.* 30a3–8; *Tim.* 30b8.

even as our body is a part of that of the universe, | so our soul is a part of the soul of the universe. And they also maintain that the fact that we follow along with the rotation of the universe is something not only asserted but clearly demonstrated, and also that we take our behavior and our fortunes from that source, and, coming to be within it as we are, we take our soul | from what encompasses us. And even as within us each part of us is a recipient of our soul, so in an analogous way we, as parts of a whole, partake of the soul of the universe as its parts. Furthermore, the statement "All soul cares for all that which has no soul"[9] signifies | just this same thing, and is proper to one who leaves nothing else outside soul, other than the soul of the universe; for this is the soul that is put in charge of all that has no soul.

2. In response to these points it must first be said that in making them of the same kind, which they do by agreeing that they are in contact with the same things, they give them the same common genus and put them beyond being parts; rather, they would be more correct | in saying that they are the same and one, and that each soul is all. And by making it one they cause it to depend on something else, which itself no longer belongs to one thing or another, but belongs to nothing, neither to a

9 *Phdr.* 246b6.

world nor to anything else, but which creates that which does belong to the world, or to anything that has soul. And indeed it is right that not all soul should belong to something, since it is a substance, but that there should be one which absolutely does not belong to anything, while
10 others, | such as do belong to something, should come to belong to that thing at a given time and incidentally.

But perhaps one should understand more clearly what "part" means in the case of things like this. One sense is as in a part of bodies, whether the body is homogeneous or non-homogeneous—that we may leave aside, drawing attention only to this point, that when one talks of a part in the case of things whose parts are all alike, the part is
15 such in respect of | its mass, not its form, as in the case, for instance, of whiteness; for the whiteness in a part of the milk is not a part of the whiteness in all of the milk, but it is the whiteness of a part, not a part of whiteness; for whiteness is entirely without magnitude and not a quantity.
20 | That is how it is in this case. But when we speak of "part" in the case of things that are not bodily, we would be talking about a part as we do in the case of numbers, like two being a part of ten—let us take it that we are talking here of numbers only in the basic sense—or like a part of a circle or a line, or as a theorem is part of a science. But in the case of units and figures, just as with bodies,
25 | it is necessary that the whole is diminished by division into parts, and that each of the parts is smaller than the

whole; for since they are quantities and their being consists in being quantities, not Quantity Itself, they necessarily become larger or smaller. It is certainly not open to us to talk about a part in this sense | in the case of soul. For it is not a thing of quantity in such a way that the whole soul could be a ten and the other, the individual soul, a unit. Many absurd consequences would follow from that, and in particular the fact that the ten would not be a single thing, and each of the units themselves would be a soul, or else the soul will be composed of things which are all without soul; and the fact that the part of the whole soul has been agreed to be of like kind to it.

| On the other hand, in the case of a continuum there is no need for the part to be such as the whole is, for example in the case of a circle or a square, or at least not all the parts are similar, in cases where one might take a part, like triangles in the case of triangles, but different ones; but they postulate that all soul is similar in kind. In the case of a line, | the part has the characteristic of being a line, but here too it differs in magnitude. In the case of soul, if the difference between the partial soul and the whole were said to be in respect of size, the soul would be a quantity and a body, if it takes its difference, as a soul, from the quantity; but the assumption was that all souls are the same, and are wholes. But it is clear | that it is not divided in the manner of magnitudes, nor would they themselves grant that the whole is cut up into parts;

for in that case they will use up the whole soul, and it will become a mere name, even if it had originally existed as a whole, as if, after wine had been divided into many parts, each part in each jar were to be described as a part of the whole wine.

Is it then a part in the sense that a theorem of a given science is said to be a part of the whole science, which itself remains in being nonetheless, while the division is like a projection and an activation of each part? In a case like this each part potentially possesses the whole science, but the science is no less a whole. If the same were to apply to the whole and the others in the case of soul, the whole, of which items of this kind are parts, would not belong to something else, but would be itself by itself; so it will not even be the soul of the world, but this soul too is one of those which are partial. So they will all be parts of the one soul, as being of similar form. But how, then, is the one the soul of the world and the others those of parts of the world?

3. Well, are they perhaps parts in the way that one might say that, in the case of the individual living being, the soul in the finger is a part of the complete soul in the whole living being?

But this account would involve either no soul existing outside body, or each and every soul being not in body, with the consequence that what is called the Soul of the

All | would be outside the body of the world. This we must investigate in due course; for the moment, however, we must examine how it might be described in terms of this scenario. For if the World Soul makes itself available to all the partial living beings, and each soul is a part in this way, if it is divided up it would not be making itself available to each one, but if it remains the same it will be present everywhere | as a whole, being one and the same in many living beings at the same time. This would no longer make one soul available as a whole and the other as a part, particularly to things that have the same capacity. For where some things have one function and some another, for example eyes and ears, one must not say that one part of the soul is present | in vision and another in the ears—division of this sort is proper to other things—but rather that the same thing is present, even if a different power is active in each, for all the powers are in both of them. It is by virtue of the organs being different that there are different perceptions, but all of them are of forms, since the soul is capable | of shaping everything into concordance with a form.

This is also shown by the fact that everything must go to one point of reference, but it is because of the organs through which they pass that not all are able to receive everything, and the affections differ in correspondence with the organs, while the judgment is made by one same

judge, as it were, who has taken note | of the words that have been spoken and the actions that have been performed.

But that the soul is one thing everywhere, even in different functions, has been said above. And if our soul were like the senses, it would not be possible for each part to cognize itself; only the whole soul will be able to do this. If intellection belonged to each soul, each would be on its own. But since in fact the soul is rational, and rational in the way that | the whole soul is said to be rational, what is being called a part will be the same as, and not a part of, the whole.

4. What is one to say, though, if the soul is one like this, when someone carries the investigation forward from this point, first raising the difficulty, whether it is possible for the soul to be one like this at the same time in all things, and then, if this can be so when it is in a body, but some other soul is not in a body. For perhaps it will follow that it is all in body, and | particularly the World Soul; for it is not said to leave the body, as is ours. And yet some say that our soul will leave this particular body, but that it will not be outside body entirely. But if it will be entirely outside body, how will one soul leave the body and another not, when it is the same? In the case of Intellect which separates itself by otherness | into parts that are not cut off from each other, but are always together—for this kind of being is indivisible—this kind of problem

would not apply; but in the case of soul which is said to be "divisible about bodies,"[10] that all of them should be some one thing involves many problems. Unless someone were to make the one | stand on its own and not fall into body, and then make all of them come from that one, the World Soul and the others, being together with each other, as it were, up to a point, and being one by not becoming the soul of any particular thing, but linked by their extremes and being together with each other at the top end, and then projecting themselves hither and thither, just as | light as soon as it arrives at the earth is divided up among houses and yet is not divided, but is one nonetheless. The World Soul is always transcendent, because it does not have the property of descending either by having a lower aspect or by turning toward the things here, but ours are not, because they have a part cut out for them | here, and because they turn toward what requires care: the one is like the soul in a large plant which manages the plant without trouble and silently, being the lowest part of the World Soul, but the lower part of ours is as if maggots were to arise in a rotten part of the plant; for this is the status | of our ensouled body in the world. But our other soul, which is of the same kind as the higher part of the World Soul, is as if some farmer were to become concerned about the maggots in the plant and were afflicted with worries in respect of the

10 *Tim*. 35a2–3.

plant; or it is as if one were to say that a person who was healthy and lived with other healthy people was occupied with his own pursuits, | either living an active life or devoting himself to contemplation, while someone who was ill and attending to cures for his body was concerned with the body and had come to belong to his body.

5. But how will one still be your soul, another this person's and another another's? Will it still belong to an individual in respect of its lower part, and not to that individual, but to that which is above, in respect of its higher part? But that way there will be Socrates whenever the soul of Socrates is in a body, but he will perish | whenever he is to the highest degree among what is best.

The answer is that nothing that really is perishes, since even in the intelligible realm the intellects there, just because they are not divided as bodies are, are not lost into a unity, but each remains as it is, preserving its actual being in its otherness. The same applies to souls too in their turn, depending as they do on each intellect, being rational projections | of the intellects, and being more diffused than they are, having as it were become much from little, and being in contact with the little which is, in each instance, less divided than they are. They want to be divided, even though unable to proceed to a full state of division, preserving as they do both sameness

and otherness, and so each remains one, and all together are one.

So then, we have given | a summary of the argument 15
that the souls come from one Soul, and those that are from the one are many in the same way as intellect, being divided and yet not divided, and the Soul that remains above is a single rational projection of Intellect, and from it come individual projections which are yet immaterial, even as is the case at the higher level.

6. But why has the World Soul, though being of like kind, produced a cosmos, while the individual soul has not, though it too has everything in itself? It has been explained that it is able to come to be and exist in many things at the same time. But now we must say—and perhaps indeed | 5
it will become known how the same thing when it is in different things can produce one thing or another, or be acted on in one way or another, or both: indeed, this must be considered separately on its own—how and why the World Soul has produced the cosmos, while the others manage just some part of the cosmos.

Well, there is nothing surprising about the fact that of those who have knowledge of the same subject some are in control of more parts of it and some | of fewer—but one 10
might reasonably ask why this should be. One could answer that there are degrees of difference in souls. Or rather, it is because the one has not departed from the All-Soul,

but has the body around itself while it is above, while the others have been allotted shares of a body which already exists with their sister soul, as it were, this soul having, as it were, previously prepared | dwellings for them. And it is possible for the one to look to the whole of Intellect, but the others rather to their own partial intellects—and perhaps even these would be capable of producing a world, but since the other had already done so it was no longer possible for them, that one having got in first. The same question would have been raised if any other one had been the first to take on the role.

| But the better response is that it does so because it is more closely linked with the things above, for the power of the things that have inclined to the world above is greater. For when souls preserve themselves in a safe condition, they act with the greatest ease, and it is characteristic of a greater power not to be affected in the course of its actions; and the power derives from remaining above. So remaining in itself it acts when things approach it, | whereas the other souls have to do the approaching themselves. So they have departed to the depths. Indeed the multifarious aspect of them is dragged down and has dragged them down with it in their thinking to being below. For one must suppose that the "seconds and thirds"[11] were so called because they are closer or further away, just as with us not all souls have

11 Cf. Plato, *Tim.* 41d.

the same capacity to | relate to the things above, but some would be united to them, some would shoot nearer the target in their aim, but others would be less able to do this, in so far as they are not active with the same powers: some are active with the first, some with the one coming after that, and others with the third, though all possess all the powers.

7. So much, then, about that. But what about the passage in the *Philebus* (30a–b) that suggests that other souls are parts of the World Soul?

This text, however, does not have the meaning that someone might think, but is rather designed to emphasize what was of concern to him at that point, namely to assert that the heaven too is ensouled. | He argues for this by saying that it is absurd to say that the heaven is devoid of soul, while we, who have a part of the body of the whole world, do have a soul. For how could the part have had a soul when the whole has no soul? He makes his position quite clear, however, in the *Timaeus* (41d), where, when the Soul of the World has come into being, | he makes the others later, mixing them from the same mixing bowl from which comes the Soul of the All, making the other one of the same kind, but contriving the difference by the use of the "second and third [levels of purity]."

But what about the passage in the *Phaedrus* (246b), "All soul cares for everything that has no soul"? For what

would it be, other than soul, that manages the nature of
15 the body | and either moulds it, structures it, or makes it? There is no indication here that one soul is such as to be able to do this, and another is not.

Well, on the other hand, he says, it is the "perfect" soul, the Soul of the All that "ranges on high" and never sinks down, but rides, as it were, on top, that acts on the cosmos, and every soul that is perfect manages it in this way. But by speaking of "the other which sheds its feathers"
20 (246c), he postulates this as another soul | distinct from that one.

As for our following the rotation of the universe, and acquiring our character from there and being affected by it,[12] this would be no indication that our souls are parts [of the All-Soul]. For a soul is able to take on many characteristics from the nature of places and waters and air; and then there is the effect of dwelling in different cities,
25 and | the mixtures of which bodies are composed. And we have granted that, by reason of being in the cosmos, we have something of the World Soul, and we have admitted that we are affected by the rotation [of the universe], but we postulated another soul in opposition to these things, and one that shows itself to be different most particularly by virtue of its opposition. But as regards the fact that we
30 are generated within the cosmos, in respect of | wombs

12 Cf. *Tim*. 90c–d.

too we declare that the soul which comes in is another one, not that of the mother.

8. This, then, is how it is with respect to the solution of these problems, and the fact of [cosmic] sympathy does not stand in the way of the argument. Since all souls come from the same one that the World Soul comes from as well, they are in sympathy with one another.

Indeed we have already said that they are respectively one and many. We have also discussed how the part | differs from the whole. In addition we have talked, in a general way, about differences between souls, but let us now add, briefly, that besides exhibiting differences in respect of their bodies, it would be possible for them to differ, most particularly, in their characters, and also in the activities of their discursive reason and as a result of the lives they have lived before, for he says that the souls' choices | are made in accordance with their previous lives. And if someone were to take the nature of soul in general, the differences in these have been spoken of in the texts where the "seconds and thirds" were mentioned, and also that all of them are all things, but each soul is what it is by virtue of what is active in it: that is, by one being actually in a state of unification, another in a condition of knowing, another | in a condition of desire, and in the fact that different souls look to different things and are or become

what it is that they are looking to; fulfillment or perfection for souls, after all, is not the same thing for all of them.

But if their whole structure is complex—for every one rational principle is multiple and variegated, like an ensouled living being with many forms— if this is the case, there is an order, and beings are not entirely disconnected from one other, | nor is there randomness at the level of real beings, seeing as there is none in bodies either, from which it follows that there is some fixed number of them. For again, true beings must be stable and intelligible entities must be self-identical, and each of them must be numerically one: that is how each is an individual. For some things, | since because of the nature of bodies their individual character is in a state of flux, in so far as their form is extraneous, their being in accordance with a form comes by virtue of imitation of the things that really are; for these latter, in so far as they do not exist as a result of composition, their existence consists in what is numerically one, which is there from the start, and they neither become what they were not nor will they | not be what they are, since if there is to be something which produces them, it would not be producing them from matter. And even if that were the case, it would have to add something substantial from itself; so there will be change affecting that thing itself, if it produces to a greater or lesser extent at a given time. But why is this so at a given time and not always? And what comes to be is not eternal | if "to a greater or

lesser extent" applies to it. But we have established that the soul is a thing of this sort.

How then can it be infinite, if it is to be in a state of permanence? The fact is that it is infinite in power, because its power is infinite, not in the sense that the soul will be divided to infinity. For God too is not limited. So too these souls are not what each of them is by virtue of an extraneous limit, for instance as being of such and such a magnitude, but it is of the magnitude it wishes to be, and as it proceeds it will never come to be outside itself, but it will reach everywhere—that part of it whose nature is to reach to bodies. It is not disparted from itself when it is in the finger or in the foot. Indeed it is in the universe, wherever it reaches, in the way it would be in one part or another of a plant even if it has been cut off, so that it is in the original plant and in the piece that has been cut off from it. For the body of the universe is one, and soul is in all of it everywhere as in a single thing.

When an animal has rotted, if many things come from it, the original soul of the whole animal will no longer be in the body; for the body has no longer the capacity to receive it, otherwise the animal would not have died. But the things that result from its perishing which are suitable for the production of living things, some of some and others of others, have soul, there being nothing from which it stands apart, but there are some things that are able to receive it and some that are not. And the things that have become

ensouled in this way I have not increased the number of souls, for they depend on the one soul, which remains one. Just as in us, if some parts are cut off, others grow in their place, so soul has departed from some things and attached itself to others, while the one soul remains as it is. In the universe, of course, the one soul always remains as it is; but of the things within it, some retain soul and some put it away, I while the powers of soul remain the same.

Second Problem: How Soul Comes to be in Body: Differences between World Soul and Other Souls (chs. 9–18)

9. But we must investigate also how soul comes to be in body. What is the manner of its presence? For this is no less worthy of wonder and investigation.

Now since the ways in which the soul enters a body are two—for one happens to a soul I which is in a body, either a soul that is changing bodies or one that is coming to an earthy body from an airy or fiery one, which they do not call changing bodies because the starting point of the entrance is not clear; while the other is when the soul comes to any body whatsoever from a disembodied state, which would constitute the soul's first participation in body—it would be right for us to investigate I this latter case, asking whatever it is that happens when the soul,

having been entirely uncontaminated with body, takes upon itself a bodily nature.

Concerning the Soul of the Universe—for it is perhaps appropriate, or rather essential, to begin with that—we must take its entry into its body and the body's ensoulment as a theoretical postulate, | for the purposes of exposition and clarity. There never was a time, in fact, when the universe was not ensouled, nor when body existed in the absence of soul, nor was there a time when matter existed and was not ordered; but it is possible to conceive of these things in separation from each other theoretically. For it is possible to unpack any combination in theory, | and in the mind. The truth is like this: if there were no body, soul would not proceed forth, since there is no other place where it is its nature to be; but if it is going to proceed, it will produce a place for itself, and thus a body. Soul's rest is, as it were, reinforced by Rest itself; one might compare the situation to an intense light | which sheds its illumination to the furthest limits of the fire, and beyond that there arises darkness; this the soul sees, and since it is there as a substrate, gives it form. For it is not right for whatever borders on soul to be without a share in an ordering principle, if only of the kind that is received, as the saying goes, "dimly in the dimness" of generated being.

This entity indeed has come into being like a fine elaborate house, | which has not been cut off from its creator, but then again he has not given a share of himself

to it, but all of it was considered worthy of a care which is beneficial to it, both to its being and to its good, in so far as it is possible for it to participate in being, but which involves no harm to the one in charge of it: for he looks after it while remaining above. It is ensouled | in this kind of way, having soul not of itself, but for itself, ruled while not ruling, possessed but not possessing. For it is located in the soul which holds it up, and nothing lacks a share in it, as if a net, submerged in the waters, were alive, without being able to make its own that in which it is. But | the net is extended along with the previous extension of the sea, to the full of its capacity: each of its parts cannot be anywhere other than where it is. But the soul is, of its nature, so extensive, because it is not itself of any particular magnitude, as to be able to comprehend the whole of body with a single embrace, and wherever the body extends, the soul is there; but if body | did not exist, the soul would have no concern for extension. For soul is what it is. The universe is of a size that corresponds to where soul is, and it is bounded by its volume, extending to the degree that it has soul itself maintaining it in existence. And the soul's shadow extends as far as the reason-principle that derives from it. And the reason-principle is of such a kind as to produce | a magnitude that is as great as the size that its form wanted to produce.

10. Now that we have got through this exposition, we must turn back to what is always in the same state, and grasp all as one simultaneity: as for instance air, light, the sun, or the moon and light and the sun again, all together, but holding the rank of first and second and third things; | similarly in this realm we have soul, permanently at rest, then the first things and the ones that come next, like the ultimate stages of a fire, what follows on the first being conceived of as the shadow at the edge of the fire, and then that too being illuminated at the same time, so that something like a form runs over what has been put in its path, something that was initially entirely obscure. | It was endowed with order according to the reason-principle of a soul which potentially had in all of itself the power to order things according to reason-principles; it is analogous to the way that the reason-principles in seeds mould and shape animals, like miniature worlds. Whatever soul touches upon is made in a way that fits the nature of the soul's essence; and the soul does not produce | on the basis of a plan that is extraneous to it, nor does it wait for consultation or investigation; for in that case it would produce not according to nature, but in accordance with an extraneous art. Art is posterior to soul and imitates it, producing obscure and weak imitations, just toys in a way, things of little worth, using many contrivances to produce an image of nature. | But soul by the power of its being is in control of bodies with respect to their coming into

being and being such as she leads them to be, without their ultimate principles being able to oppose her will. At a lower level, there are elements which get in each other's way and are thus often deprived of arriving at their proper form, which the reason-principle at the microcosmic level wants
25 to produce; | but there at the higher level the whole form comes into being under its agency and the things that have come to be have order all at once, and what has come to be attains beauty without trouble and without hindrance.

Now soul has produced in it on the one hand images of gods, on the other habitations of men, and other things for other types of being. What, after all, should come
30 to be from soul other than things | for which it has the productive power? It pertains to fire to make things hot, and to something else to make them cold; but soul has a part that resides in itself and another that goes out from it to something else. In things without soul, the part that is internal to them is dormant, as it were, but another part which goes out from them to something else assimilates to itself what can be affected by it; and indeed it is common
35 | to all existent things to bring other things to a state of assimilation to themselves. But the function of soul is something wakeful, both that aspect which is internal to it, and that which goes out to something else. Therefore it makes other things live which do not have life on their own account, and live a life of the sort which it itself lives. So living as it does in accordance with a reason-principle,

it gives a reason-principle to the body, an image of the one it has itself—for what it gives to the body | is only an image of life—and also forms of bodies, of which it has the reason-principles. And indeed it also has those of gods and of all things; it is because of this that the world has everything that it has.

11. It seems to me that the sages of old who wanted to attract to themselves the presence of the gods, and made temples and statues to that end, looking to the nature of the universe, had in mind that the nature of the soul is a thing that is in general easy to attract, but the easiest way of all | to receive it would be if one were to craft something receptive which was able to receive some share of it. And that is receptive which is in any way imitative of it, like a mirror able to grasp some image of it. Indeed the nature of the universe, having with ease made all things in imitation of the realities whose reason-principles it possesses, since | each thing came to be as it is as a reason-principle in matter—this reason-principle being formed in accordance with one that is prior to matter—joined it to that god in accordance with whom it came into being and to whom the soul looked, and whom it possessed, in its production. Indeed it was impossible for the thing produced to come into being without a share in him, nor again for him to come down into it. That sun there was | Intellect—let us take that as a model in our discussion—and Soul comes

next to it, being dependent on Intellect, maintaining its stability while the Intellect too remains stable. This latter gives her outer edges, those bordering on this sun in this realm, to this sun and, through itself as an intermediary, forges a link with that higher realm, and becomes, as it were, an interpreter | of messages from that sun to this, and those from this one to that, in so far as they can reach it through the agency of Soul.

Nothing, after all, is a long way off or far from anything else, and yet again things are far removed from one another by virtue of difference and freedom from mixture, but they (sc. divine things) are on their own, and are present (sc. to things here) while remaining separate. The (celestial) beings in this realm attain divine status by never standing apart from the gods there: they depend | on the original Soul by means of the soul that has, as it were, departed from it, and by means of it, by virtue of which they exist and are what they are actually called, they look to Intellect, with their soul not looking anywhere other than there.

12. The souls of human beings saw images of themselves as though in the mirror of Dionysus and went in that direction, starting forth from the higher realm, but even so these are not cut off from their own source or from Intellect. For they did not go with their intellect, but they descended on the one hand as far as | the earth, while on

the other, "their heads" are still "firmly fixed above the heavens."[13] However, it happened that they descended to a greater extent than they should have, because their middle part was constrained, since attention was demanded by that to which they had descended. But "Father Zeus took pity on them" in their labours and made their shackles, the focus of their toil, mortal, and grants them | periods of respite, making them free from bodies from time to time, so that they too can be there where the World Soul always is, never turning its attention toward the things of this realm.

For what it has is already the whole world, and that is and will be sufficient unto itself, and it completes its revolution in stretches of time in accordance with reason-principles which do not change. And the things in it are | always brought back to the same state in accordance with the passage of time, in measures consisting of determined lives, and they are brought to a state of harmony with the things there, the things here also fulfilling their role in accordance with those there, with everything being ordered according to a single reason-principle in terms of the descents and ascents of souls, and in respect of everything else too. Evidence of this is the concord of the souls | with the order of this world, souls which are not detached, but in their descent put themselves in touch with

13 Employing a phrase from Homer, *Iliad* 4. 443.

it, and with its rotation produce a single concord, so that their fortunes, their lives and their choices are indicated by the configurations of the stars, and, as it were, give out a single sound that is not out of tune; | and this is rather the real meaning of the riddling references to musicality and harmoniousness.[14] This would not have been so unless the world acted and was acted upon in accordance with each of those things in measures consisting of revolutions and orders and passing through lives in their several kinds, lives which the souls pass through, sometimes in the intelligible realm, sometimes in the heavens, | and sometimes turning toward these regions here.

Intellect as a whole, for its part, is always above and would never come to be outside its own realm, but is established above as a whole and sends messages to things here by way of Soul. Soul, since it is nearer to it, is disposed according to the form that comes from there and gives it to the things below itself: one soul does it always in the same way, another in different ways at different times, | while maintaining order in its comings and goings. It does not always descend to the same extent, but sometimes does so more and sometimes less, even if it is descending into the same species of being; each goes, in fact, to what is ready for it by virtue of the likeness of its disposition. For the

14 A reference to Plato, *Rep.* X 617b.

soul goes to whatever destination it has become like, one to a human being, another to another kind of living thing.

13. For thus are the ineluctable prescription and (cosmic) Justice based in a nature which forces each thing to go in due order to its proper destination, which comes into being as an image of the model corresponding to its original choice and disposition; all that kind of soul in that realm is near akin to that | in conformity with which it possesses its own disposition: and it does not need the thing that once sent it forth and introduced it to its destination, neither in order to go toward body at a certain time, nor to go to a particular body, but when its time arrives it goes down automatically, as it were, and enters the body it must enter—and there is a different time for different souls, and when this comes up to it, like the summons of a herald, it descends—| and it enters the appropriate body, so that the things that come to be are moved and carried about as if by the powers of magicians and strong forces of that sort that pull them. It is like the way in which the organization of the living being is brought to perfection in each single body, with the soul initiating and generating each feature, like the growing of beards and the sprouting of horns and | impulses at a given moment in this or that direction, and efflorescences on the skin which were not there before, and so too in the case of the management of trees which grow at fixed times.

The souls go neither voluntarily nor because they have been sent—or at least their volition is not such as would arise from a choice; it is more like a natural leap, as it might be toward a natural desire for marriage, or | in another case toward the accomplishment of some noble exploits, not provoked by reasoned calculation. But things of a certain kind always have a destiny of a certain kind, for a thing of one kind being realized, perhaps, now, for another later. The Intellect prior to the cosmos has its destiny, too, to remain in that realm, however much it sends forth; whereas particular things are sent out subject to the universal law. | For the universal bears down upon each thing, and the law does not derive its power of fulfillment from outside, but it is given to be in things that use it and bear it around with them. And if and when the time comes, then what the law wants to happen happens through the agency of the things which instantiate it, so that they bring it to fulfillment in so far as they are carrying it around, | and it derives its strength from being located in them, as though weighing down upon them and producing in them a desire and a pang, to go there where the law in them tells them, as it were, to go.

14. In consequence of all this, this ordered universe, which shines already with many lights and is illuminated by souls, receives further forms of order in addition to the previous ones, deriving one from another, both from the

gods there and from the other intellects which produce | souls. Such, it seems, is the riddling meaning of the myth, which tells how, when Prometheus had fashioned the woman, the other gods too adorned her. It says he "mixed earth with water" and put a human voice in her, and made her like the goddesses in appearance, and Aphrodite gave her something and so did the Graces, and other gods gave her other gifts, and they named her | from the gift and from all the givers; for all gave their share to this product fashioned, as it were, by fore-thinking. But what could Epimetheus' rejection of the gift mean other than that the choice of what is in the intelligible realm is better? And he who fashioned it is himself in bondage because he is somehow still attached to what has come into being | through him, and this kind of bond comes from outside. And the liberation by Heracles signifies that he has power within him, such that even so he can free himself.

Now one may interpret this story any way one wishes; the important thing is that it is the circumstances of the gift to the cosmos that is the clear subject of this story, and that is in harmony with my account.

15. The souls proceed, then, peering out from the intelligible realm, in the first instance to the heavens, and, taking on a body there, they then pass by means of it to more earthy bodies, to the degree to which they are extended in length. Some go from the heavens to the lower

level of bodies, | while others are inserted from some bodies into others, those, that is, whose power was not adequate to raise them from here because of the heaviness laid upon them, and the consequent forgetfulness, since they drag about with them a lot that was loaded onto them to weigh them down. They become different either by reason of the variation of the bodies into which they are put, or by virtue of accidents of fortune or upbringing, or because they contribute distinct features derived from themselves, | or for all of these reasons, or certain of them. And some of them have become entirely subject to the fate that rules here, and some are sometimes in this state, and sometimes under their own control, and some acquiesce in undergoing as much as is necessary, but they retain the power to keep under their control the things that are their own proper functions, living according to another law-code that applies to all of reality, | while submitting themselves to this other dispensation. This code is constructed from all of the reason-principles and causes operative in this realm, and from souls' movements and the laws that come from the higher realm, acting in harmony with these latter and taking its principles from there, and weaving together with them what comes after them, while preserving unshaken all the things which can | hold themselves in conformity with the disposition of what is above, and taking the rest around as is natural for them, so that the responsibility resides in what has come down, because they have done

so in such a way that some have found themselves in one situation, while others are placed in another.

16. The punishments that justly affect the wicked it is appropriate to assign to the order of the world, in so far as it leads things on in accordance with what is fitting; but as for what happens to good men outside of justice, such as (unmerited) punishments, poverty or disease, are we to say that these happen because of previous acts | of wrongdoing? For these things are woven into the texture of the whole and indicated beforehand, so that these too happen in accordance with reason.

No, these are not in accordance with the reason-principles of nature, nor were they among the antecedent causes, but are consequential on these. For example, when a building collapses, a person who happens to be under it dies, whatever his moral quality, or when a pair of horses | are moving in good order, or even a single horse, anything that crosses their path will be injured or trampled upon. Either (we must conclude that) this injustice, while it is bad for its victim, is useful for the texture of the world; or it is actually not unjust, deriving its justification from previous events. For we may not hold that some things have been subjected to the order, while others have been left on a looser rein, in the interests of | preserving free will. For if it is necessary that things happen in accordance with causes and natural consequences, and in conformity with a single

rational plan and one order, then one must conclude that even the smaller things have been included in the order and woven in with the others. Injustice which is done by one person to another is unjust for the perpetrator, and the doer is not released from blame, | but as subsumed within the order of the universe it is not unjust within that, not even as regards the victim, but that is how it had to be. And if the victim is a good man, the end of these things is for the good. One must consider that this order is "not without god" nor unjust, but is exact as regards the distribution of what is appropriate, while on the other hand that it has unclear causes | and allows grounds for complaint to those who do not know them.

17. It might be deduced that the souls first go from the intelligible realm to the region of the heaven from such considerations as the following. If the heaven is the better part of the sensible region, it would be contiguous with the lowest of the intelligibles. So this is the first thing to be ensouled | from there and to participate in it, as being more suited to doing so. What is earthy comes last, and is of a nature to participate in a lesser soul, and is far from incorporeal nature. All souls, then, illuminate the heaven and give as it were the bulk of themselves and their first part to it, but light up | the rest of the universe with their subsequent parts, and it is not better for them to proceed downward to any great extent.

For there is something like a center, and in addition to it a circle shining from it, and in addition to these another circle, light coming from light. But outside these there is another circle no longer of light; | this one needs the brightness that belongs to another, by reason of lacking its own light. Let this last one be a wheel, or rather a sphere of that kind, which receives from the third one—because it is next to it—the amount of light that that one throws. So the great light remains where it is and shines out, and the brightness that comes from it goes through the world in due proportion, and the others | join with it in its shining, some remaining where they are, while others are drawn out to a greater extent by the alluring gleam of what they shine on.

Then, when the things shined on require more care, just as when boats are in a storm the helmsmen concentrate to a greater extent on their care for the ships and do not notice that they are neglecting themselves, so that they often risk | being pulled down with the wreck of their ships, just so the souls incline to a greater extent to the things that are theirs. In consequence of that they were held down, shackled by the fetters of sorcery, constrained by their care for nature. But if each living being were such as the world is, a perfect and adequate body and one not at risk of being affected, | the soul which is said to be present would not have had to be present to it, and would give life to it while remaining entirely in the world above.

18. Does the soul use calculation (*logismos*) before it comes, and again on its departure?

No, calculation comes in when the soul is already in difficulty, filled with care, and weaker than it was; the need for calculation betokens a diminution of intellect | in respect of its self-sufficiency—as is the case with crafts, where calculation is for craftsmen faced by difficulties, but when there is no problem the craft itself takes control and does the work.

But, one might ask, if the souls were in that realm without calculation, how could they still be regarded as rational? It is because they have the capacity, one might reply, when the occasion demands, to find a good solution by thinking through it. One must think of calculation, | after all, as something like this: if one takes calculation as that disposition which constantly derives from intellect and is always present in souls, a static activity and something like a reflection, then they would be using calculation even there. One must not, I think, imagine that they use speech when they are in the intelligible realm, and at all events, even if they have | bodies when they are in the heavens, all the things that they would talk about here because of needs or disagreements would not exist there. And as they do everything in order and in conformity with nature, they would not be involved in giving instructions or advice, but would know things from each other intuitively. For down here too, even without people saying anything, we would

know | many things from their eyes. But there all body 20
is pure, and each is like an eye, and nothing is hidden or fabricated, but before one speaks to another that one has come to know the situation just by looking. But in the case of daemons and souls in the air, there is nothing odd about their employing speech; for they are living beings of such a kind as to do this.

Third Problem: The Manner of the Soul's Embodiment (chs. 19–23)

19. Are the "indivisible" and the "divisible" in the same place,[15] as though mixed together, or is the indivisible in another place, and corresponding to a different object, while the divisible, as it were, comes next after it, and is a different part of the soul, even as we say that the reasoning part is one thing | and the irrational part another? 5

This question may be resolved by grasping clearly what we mean by each of these terms. Now he (sc. Plato) uses the term "indivisible" in an absolute sense, but "divisible" with a qualification: he says that the soul becomes "divisible about bodies," implying thus that it has not antecedently been divided. We must look at the nature of the body and see what kind of soul it needs | to be alive, and what aspect 10
of soul must be present to body, everywhere and to all of

15 Cf. Plato, *Tim*. 35a.

it. The whole sensitive part of it, if it is to feel and perceive throughout the body, comes to be divided: for inasmuch as it is everywhere it may be said to be divided; but as it appears everywhere as a whole, it would not be said that
15 it is absolutely divided, | but rather that it "comes to be divided about bodies." If someone were to say that it is not divided in respect of the other senses but only in that of touch, one must reply that it is necessary that it be divided like this in the case of the others too, granted that what participates in them is a body, even if to a lesser extent than in the case of touch. Indeed, the same applies to its
20 vegetative and | growth faculties; and if desire functions around the liver, and the spirited faculty around the heart, the same account applies to them too. But perhaps he (sc. Plato) does not include these in that mixture, and perhaps these arise in a different way and supervene on one of the faculties already included.

25 And reason and intellect? These no longer | give themselves to body: this is because their function is not performed through an organ of the body. For the body would be an impediment if one were to use it in one's investigations.

So each of the two, the indivisible and the divisible, is a different thing, and they are not mixed together as a single thing, but they are like a whole made of parts, with
30 each of the two pure and separate | in its power. Indeed if what becomes divided about bodies derives its indivisibility

from the power above, the same thing can be indivisible and divisible, as being mixed from itself and from the power that comes to it from above.

20. Further, we should address the question whether these and the other so-called parts of the soul are spatially located, or whether these latter are absolutely not, while the others are, and, if so, where they would be, or whether absolutely no part is spatially located. For either, if we do not delimit a place for each of the parts of the soul, but put | none of them anywhere, putting it no more inside the body than outside it, we shall make it have no soul, and we shall be at a loss as to where it would be appropriate to say that the functions of the bodily organs are exercised, while if we assign a place to some parts and not to others, we shall think that the ones to which we do not assign one do not act within us, | so that not all of our soul would be in us.

So, as a general principle, we must declare that none of the parts of the soul, nor yet the whole of it, is in the body as in a place; for place is a thing that contains something, and specifically a thing that contains body, and where each divided part of something is, there it is, so that it is not in any place as a whole. But soul is not a body, so it is not a thing that is contained | any more than a thing that contains. Nor yet is it in a body as in a vessel, for then body would become a thing without soul, whether it contains soul as a vessel or as place—unless, after all, it is there by

virtue of some sort of transmission from the soul, which remains concentrated in itself, and the amount that the vessel partakes in will be lost to it. But place in the strict
20 sense is incorporeal and | not a body; so why would it need soul? Further, body would abut soul with its outer edge, not with itself. And there would be many other factors opposing its being in body as in a place. Thus the place would always be carried around with it, and there will be some other thing that carries the place itself around. And even if place were taken to be bare extension, so much
25 | the more soul would not be in body as in a place. For extension has to be a void. But body is not a void; though perhaps that in which the body is will be, so that it would be the body that will be in a void.

Nor yet will it be in the body as in a substrate. For what is in a substrate is a state of what it is in, like color
30 or shape, and | soul, after all, is something separate. Nor will it be in it as a part in a whole; for the soul is not a part of the body. And if someone were to specify, "like a part of that whole which is the living being," firstly the same problem would remain, how it would be in it as in a whole; for it is not as the wine is in the jar of wine, nor indeed as the jar, nor anything else for that matter, will be in itself.
35 | Nor is it in it like a whole in the parts; for it is ridiculous to say that the soul is a whole and the body its parts.

But then nor is it like a form in matter; for the form in matter is inseparable, and the form comes later, when

the matter already exists. But the soul, being distinct from the form, produces the form in the matter. If they are going to say that it is not the form that comes to be in the matter, | but the form as separate, it is still not clear how this form is in the body.

So how is it that the soul is universally declared to be in the body?

Well, it is because the soul is not a thing that can be seen, but the body is. So, seeing a body, and understanding that it is a thing with soul because it is moved and has sense-perception, we say | that the body has soul. And so it would seem to follow for us to say that the soul is in the body. If, on the other hand, the soul were something that could be seen or perceived, encompassed on all sides by life and extending equally to all the extremities of the body, we should not say that the soul is in the body, but rather that the thing which is not such is in the superior being, and | that what is held together is in what holds it together, and that what is in flux is in what is not in flux.

21. Well then, how is it present? If someone were to ask this, while offering no suggestion himself, what shall we say? And what if he asked about all of it uniformly, or if different parts are present in different ways? It is clear, after all, that none of the ways of something being in something else that we have just now been enumerating | fits the case of soul in respect of body. There is, certainly,

the suggestion that the soul is in the body in the way that a helmsman is in his ship: that is helpful in respect of the soul's capacity to be separate, but it would not at all provide us with the manner of its presence, which is what we are now investigating. This is because as a sailor the helmsman
10 | would be in the ship incidentally, but how would he be in it as helmsman? For he is in any case not in the whole ship in the way that the soul is in the whole body.

So should we say that it is like a skill in its tools, for instance in the helm, if the helm were something with a soul, so that the helmsmanship which moves it in accordance with its skill would be inside it? But the
15 difference here is that | the skill originates outside. If then, in accordance with the example of the helmsman entering into the helm, we were to propose that the soul is in the body as in a natural tool—for that is how it moves it in whatever it wants to do—would we be any further along toward what we are looking for? Will we not rather
20 have a problem again about how it is | in the tool, even if this is a different way of being in something from those before? But nonetheless we still have a desire to find out and come to closer grips with the problem.

22. So should we say, then, that when soul is present to body it is present in the way that fire is present to air? For fire too, in its turn, while being present, is not present, and, while penetrating the air throughout, is yet mixed with no part of it, but stays where it is while the air flows

by. And when the air comes to be outside | the place where the light is, it departs while retaining nothing, but while it is under the light it is lit, so that it is right to say in this case too, that the air is in the light, rather than that the light is in the air. Therefore he (sc. Plato) does well in not locating the soul in the body in the case of the world, but rather the body in the soul, and he also asserts | that there is a part of the soul in which there is body, but another in which there is no body, by which he clearly means the powers of the soul which the body does not need.

And indeed the same account applies in the case of the other souls. One must not say that there is a presence of the other powers of the soul to the body, but that those it needs are present, and that they are present | not by being located in the parts of the body, nor again in the whole of it, and in particular that for the purpose of sense-perception the sensitive power is present to everything that is provided with sensation, but for their various activities different parts of it are present to the different parts.

23. What I mean is this: in the process of the ensouled body's being illuminated by soul, different parts of the body participate in it in different ways. In accordance with the suitability of an organ for a given function, the soul provides the power appropriate for that function. | In this way we say that the power in the eyes is the power of vision, that in the ears the power of hearing, the power

of taste in the tongue, that of smell in the nose, while the power of touch is present in the whole body; for the whole body serves as sense-organ to the soul for this type of perception.

Since the organs of touch are situated | at the first points of the nerves, which also have the power to move the living being, since that is where this kind of power makes itself available, and since the nerves start from the brain, they situated the principle of sense-perception and impulse and in general of the whole living being here. They assumed that what is going to use them | is present where the principles of the organs clearly are—or rather, it is better to say that the start of the activation of the power is there—for it is at the place from which the organ was going to be moved that the power of the craftsman, as it were, which is appropriate to the organ would exert itself, or rather not the power—for the power is everywhere |—but the beginning of the activity is at the point where the originating principle of the organ is.

So since the power of sense-perception and impulse proper to that soul which engages in perception and imagination has reason above it, as a nature neighboring on its lower side the thing above which it is |, it was situated by the ancients at the highest point in the living being, in the head, as not being in the brain, but in this sensitive faculty, which was located in the brain in the way we have mentioned. For one part of the soul had to

be granted to the body, and in particular to that part of the body that is receptive of activity; while the other part, which has nothing in common with the body, had need of communicating fully with that other entity, which is a form of soul, and of a soul capable of receiving apprehensions emanating from reason. For the sensitive faculty is in a way formative of judgments, and the imaginative faculty is as it were intellective, as are impulse and appetition which follow imagination and reason.

So the reasoning faculty is there, not as in a place, but because what is there profits from its presence. And how the term "there" applies to the sensitive faculty has been specified above. Again, since the vegetative part of the soul, that concerned with growth and nutrition, is not absent from any of the body but nourishes it with the blood, and the blood that nourishes is in the veins, and the starting-point of the veins and the blood is in the liver, the part of the soul that is the desiring faculty has been assigned to live there, since this is where this power, so to speak, exerts its force; for what produces generation, nourishment and growth must necessarily desire these things. But for the blood that is thin, light, active and pure, constituting a suitable organ for the spirited part, its source, the heart—this being where this kind of blood is separated off—has been established as a fitting home for the seething of the spirited part.

Fourth Problem: The Soul's Departure from the Body: What Does It Remember and How; and to What Level or Levels of Being is Memory Properly Appropriate? (chs. 3, 24–4, 17)

24. But where will the soul come to be when it has departed from the body?

It will not be here, where there is nothing that can receive it in any way, nor can it stay on with what is not of a nature to receive it, unless we are to assume some part of the material realm that draws soul to itself, in the
5 event of its being in an irrational state. | But it will be in that, if it possesses some extraneous element, which it follows to that place where it is this thing's nature to be and to come into being. And since there are many possible places for each such soul, the difference must have come from the respective disposition of each, and also from the justice inhering in the nature of things. For one will
10 never escape | the due retribution for unjust acts; there is no dodging the divine law, which has inherent in it the execution of the judgment already made. The person on whom it is inflicted is unwittingly borne toward what it is proper for him to suffer, blown about everywhere on an unstable course in his wanderings, but in the end, as if greatly exhausted by his resistance, he falls into the place
15 appropriate to him, | taking on involuntary suffering as a result of his voluntary movement. And it has been

specified in the law how much he must suffer and for how long, and again there is a concordance between the release from punishment and the power of escaping upward from those places, through the power of that harmony which controls everything.

| Now when they have bodies, the souls have the capacity to experience bodily punishments; but those of the souls that are pure and in no way drag any part of the body with them will necessarily be nowhere in body. So, if they are not anywhere in body—for they have no body—| in that realm where there is substance and being and the divine—that is to say, in God—there and with these and in this kind of being will such a soul be. And if you still look to know where, you must look to the realm where those things are. But when you look for them, look not with your eyes, nor as if you are looking for bodies.

25. On the subject of memory, it is likewise worth investigating whether the souls themselves, when they have left this realm, have the capacity to remember, or whether some do and some do not, and whether they remember everything or some things, and whether they will continue to remember always, | or only for a certain time, close to their departure hence. But if we are going to conduct a proper investigation into this question, we must first get a clear idea of precisely what it is that remembers. I do not mean what memory is, but rather in which of the

things that are it naturally has its place. The question as to what memory is has been discussed elsewhere, and indeed repeatedly so, but what we need to grasp more precisely now
10 | is what it is that has the natural capacity to remember.

Now if memory is of something acquired, either as something learned or something experienced, memory would not exist in those beings which are not subject to affections or which are <not> in time. One must not, for example, attribute memory to God or to Being or to
15 Intellect; | for these have no element of time, but Being is attended by eternity and there is no before and after there: it is always as it is and in the same state, and admits of no alteration. How, after all, could what is in an identical and uniform condition be involved in memory, since it neither has nor maintains a different state after the one it had before, or experiences one intellection after another,
20 so that it would be in one state, | while remembering the different one that it was in before?

But what prevents it from knowing the changes in other things, such as the revolutions of the cosmos, without itself changing?

No, this cannot be, because then it would be thinking first one thing and then another, following the changes of what is altered, and remembering is a different process
25 from thinking. | And one must not say that it remembers its own intellections. For these did not come to it, so that it would need to lay hold of them to stop them going away:

indeed, if that were the case, one would be afraid that its own substance would depart from it. Nor should we say that the soul remembers in the same way as we say memory takes place of things which are inherent in its nature, but that, when once it is | down here, it is possible for it to 30
possess them while not being active in respect of them, particularly when it has just come down here. But as for its being active, the ancients seem to apply "memory" and "recollection" to souls that activate what they have within them. So this would be another kind of memory; hence time is not attached to memory in this sense.

But perhaps we are being careless | about this question, 35
and deficient in critical sense. For someone might raise the question as to whether this kind of recollection and memory that is cited does not belong to that soul, but to another more obscure type, or perhaps to the compound of body and soul, the living being. If it belongs to another type of soul, when and how does it acquire them? And if it belongs to the living being, once again, when and how does it do so? We must investigate, then, | what it is in us that 40
retains memory, which is what we have been investigating from the outset. If it is the soul that remembers, which faculty or part; and if it is the living being, even as some have thought that that is what sense-perception belongs to, how does it do it, and what must we say the living being is, and also if one must posit that it is the same thing that

45 I apprehends perceptions and intellections, or a different thing for either one.

26. If the living being, the compound of body and soul, is involved in actual perceptions, perceiving must be something like—and this is why it is said to be a common function—drilling a hole or weaving, so that the soul would
5 be involved in sense-perception I in the role of craftsman and the body in the role of his instrument, since the body undergoes affections and works for the soul, while the soul receives the impressions made on the body, or that which comes through the body, or the judgment which is made as a result of the body's affection. So the perception
10 of this may be termed a common function, I but the corresponding memory would not have to belong to the body-soul compound, since the soul has already received the impression and either retained it or abandoned it—unless one were to take as evidence for remembering also being common to both parts the fact that we come to be able to remember or tend to forget things as a result of different mixtures in our bodies.

15 But even though the body could be said to be I an impediment or otherwise, yet remembering might nonetheless belong to the soul. After all, how will it be the body-soul compound but not the soul that remembers things that are learnt?

Now if the compound living being is such in the sense of being something different arising from its two components, | in the first place it is absurd to say that the living being is neither body nor soul; for the living being will not be some other thing because the two have changed, nor again because they have been mixed together, so that the soul would be in the living being only potentially. And then, even if this is the case, remembering will nonetheless belong to the soul, just as in the mixture of honey and wine, in so far as there is an element that is sweet, | that will come from the honey.

What then if the soul itself were to do the remembering, but, by virtue of being in the body, because it is not pure, but has as it were acquired a certain quality, it can be marked by the impressions that come from sense-objects, as it is also by having, as it were, a base in the body which enables it to receive them, and not have them, so to say, flow past it?

But first of all | one would object that the impressions are not things with magnitude, nor are they like sealings, or resistances to pressure, or the making of impressions, because there is no pressing down, not even as in wax, but the way it happens is like intellection, even in the case of sense-objects; while in the case of intellections, on the other hand, what could one mean by resistance to pressure? And what need is there of a body or a bodily quality which goes along with it?

But, one might claim, | the soul must have memory of its own movements, such as what it desired, and what it did not gain the enjoyment of, in the case where the object of desire did not arrive at its body. For how could the body speak of things that did not impinge upon it? Or how will it remember with the aid of the body what the body has no natural capacity to remember? Rather we must say that some things, | which come through the body, come to a stop in the soul, while others pertain to the soul alone, if the soul is to be something, and there is to be a nature and function of soul. And if this is so, there must be desire and a memory of the desire, and then of attaining or failing to attain its object, since the soul's nature is not in the class of things that are in flux.

For if this is not the case, | we shall not be able to attribute to it awareness or consciousness or any power of putting things together or understanding. For it is not the case that it has none of these in its own nature and acquires them in the body, but it has certain activities the operation of whose function requires organs; of some it has come bringing the potencies, while for others it brings | the actualizations as well. But for the exercise of memory it finds body an impediment; since even now with the addition of certain things there is forgetting, and with their removal and purification from them memory often emerges again. And since memory involves stability, body, which is mobile and subject to flux, must be the cause of

forgetting, not of memory. So | the "river of Lethe"[16] should be understood in this sense. Let this condition, then, belong to the soul.

27. But which soul, the one we call the more divine, by virtue of which we are who we are, or the other which we have from the world as a whole? The answer is that we must say that there are memories proper to each of the two, some peculiar to each and some common to both. And when the two souls are together, the memories are all together, | but when they become separate, if both were to exist and remain, each would have its own memories for a longer time, but also, for a short period, those of the other. In any case, the shade of Heracles in Hades[17]—I think we must consider this shade also to be us—remembers all the things that were done in his life, | because his life belonged predominantly to the shade. But the other souls which became identified with the compound nevertheless had no more to say: it is merely what belonged to this life that these souls too knew about, other than perhaps something to do with justice, but what Heracles himself, the one separate from the shade, had to say is not mentioned.

What then would that other soul say | when it has been freed from the body and is on its own? The one which drags along with it anything at all would speak about

16 Cf. Plato, *Rep.* X 621c.

17 A reference to Homer, *Odyssey* XI 601–602.

all the things that the human being did or suffered, but with the progress of time after death, memories of other things would appear from its former lives, and so it would hold some of the memories of the latest life of little value, and dismiss them. When it has been purified of body to
20 a greater extent, | it will pass in review even some things that it did not hold in its memory here. And if it comes to be in another body, and departs from it, it will talk about the things of its external life and about the body which it has just let go, and many things belonging to former lives. But in time it will always forget many of the things that have accrued to it.

But what will the soul remember when it has come
25 to be on its own? Well, first we must investigate | which faculty of the soul possesses the capacity of remembering.

28. Is it the one with which we perceive and with which we learn? Or do we remember objects of desire with the desiring faculty, and things that caused anger in us with the spirited faculty? For it is not the case, one might say, that one thing will have enjoyment of something, while another will remember the objects proper to that enjoyment. At
5 any rate, the desiring faculty | will be moved by the things it enjoyed when the object of desire is seen again, clearly by memory. For why should it not relate to the objects of another faculty, or in a way other than that in which that faculty addresses them? What then prevents us attributing

perception of such things as well to the desiring faculty, and desire to the sensitive faculty, and all things to all faculties, so that each of them receives its name by virtue of the element predominant in it?

But, one might say, perception relates to each in a different way; so, for example, vision, not the desiderative faculty, has seen something, | but the desiderative faculty is moved by the sensation through a kind of transmission, not in such a way that it can announce what kind of sensation it has had, but so that it is affected without being conscious of it. And again, in the case of anger, sense-perception has seen the man who did the injury, but it is the spirited faculty that bestirs itself, as if, when a shepherd has seen | a wolf menacing the flock, his dog, who has not himself seen it with his eyes, were aroused by the smell or the noise. And let us take the case where the desiderative faculty has enjoyed something, and has a trace of the event deposited in it, not as a memory, but as a disposition or affection; but it is something else that has observed the enjoyment and has retained in itself the memory of what has happened. And evidence of this | is the fact that often the memory of things that the desiring faculty participated in is not pleasant; whereas if it had been in it, it would have been.

29. Shall we then shift memory, and transfer it to the sense-perceptive faculty, and shall we postulate the identity of the remembering and sense-perceptive faculties? But

if the shade also is to have memory, as we were saying, the sense-perceptive faculty will be double, | and even if it is not the sense-perceptive faculty that remembers, but something else, still what remembers will be double. Further, if it is the sense-perceptive faculty that remembers, that faculty will also handle items of scientific knowledge and thoughts. But in fact a different faculty must deal with either of these. Shall we then make the thing that apprehends them common, and attribute memory of both kinds to that? But if what cognizes sensible and intelligible objects | were one and the same, perhaps that would make some sense; but if it is divided into two, there would nonetheless still be two faculties—and if we give both to each of the two souls, there would be four.

But in general what necessity is there for us to remember with the same thing with which we perceive, | and for both to happen with the same faculty, or for us to remember thoughts with the same thing with which we think? No, since the same people are not the best at thinking and at remembering, and those who enjoy the same degree of perception do not remember equally well, and some have a special facility for perceiving, while others, whose perceptions are not acute, remember well.

But again, | if each of the two has to be different, and something else will remember things that sense-perception perceived first, must that too have perceived what it is going to remember?

In fact there will be nothing to stop what is perceived, for the person who will remember it, being an object of imagination, and remembering and retaining the memory will belong to the faculty of imagination, which is a different entity. | For this is the point at which the sensation terminates, and what was seen is present to it when the sensation is no longer there. And if the image of what is already absent is in this, it will remember, even if it is present to it for just a short time. But the man to whom it is present for a short time will have a brief memory of it, whereas if it is present for a long time people will remember better, with this power being stronger, | so that it will not happen that the memory is shaken up and destabilized as a consequence of its being altered. Memory, then, belongs to the imaginative faculty, and remembering will be of things of this kind. We shall say that people differ in respect of memory either because their powers are in different states, or because they pay attention or do not, or because they possess certain bodily temperaments | or not, and because these change or do not, and are, as it were, in turmoil. But we can deal with these matters on another occasion.

30. But what is it that remembers thought-processes? Does the imaginative faculty remember these too? If it is the case that an image goes with every thought, perhaps, then if this image, which is like a representation of the

thought, persists, there would in this way be a memory | of what has been cognized. If not, we must look to some other solution. Perhaps, for instance, we might postulate the reception into the imaginative faculty of the discursive sequel (*logos*) such as follows on an intuitive thought. For the thought has no parts, and when it has not yet, as it were, proceeded to the outside, it remains unnoticed within, but the discursive sequel, by unfolding it and bringing it forth from the thought to | the imaginative faculty, exhibits the thought as if in a mirror, and this is how there is apprehension of it, and persistence of it, and memory. Therefore, though the soul is always tending toward intellection, it is when it comes to be at the level of the imaginative faculty that we gain apprehension of this. For intellection is one thing and | apprehension of intellection another, and we always exercise intellection, but do not always apprehend it; and this is because what receives it receives not only intellectual thoughts, but also sense-perceptions on the lower side.

31. But if memory belongs to the faculty of imagination, and we have said that each soul remembers,[18] there will be two faculties of imagination. Let us grant that, when the souls are apart, they each have one, but when they are in the same place, in us, how are there two, and in which of

18 Cf. above, ch. 27, 3.

them do the memories happen? If in both, | there will always be duplicate images; for it would not be the case that the imaginative faculty of the one soul would be for objects of intellection, while that of the other was for sense-objects—that way there would be two living beings having nothing in common with each other.

If, then, both souls have such a faculty, what will be the difference between them? And then, if so, how do we not discern such a difference? The answer is that, when the one soul agrees with the other, | and the two faculties of imagination are not separate, and the higher one is dominant, the image becomes one, as if a shadow were following the other, or as if a weaker light were being subsumed into a stronger one. But whenever there is conflict and discord, then the other one manifests itself on its own account, while we do not realize that it is in a different faculty. | And in general the duality of the souls escapes our notice. For the two of them have come to be one thing, and the one of them rides dominant over the other. Now this other one has seen everything, and when it has gone out of the body, it keeps some of the things that pertain to the lower soul, and lets others go. It is like when we have at some time taken up associations with a lower class of person, and then change these companions for others, we remember a few things to do with the former, | but more that pertain to the people who are better.

32. But what about memories of one's friends, children or wife? Or indeed of one's country, and such things as it would not be out of place for a man of moral worth to remember?

The answer is that the imaginative faculty remembers each thing with the accompaniment of emotion, while the man of moral worth would have memories of these same things without the emotion; for one might take it
5 that the emotion is in the former right from the start, | and those of the emotions that are respectable are in the good soul, in so far as it has association with the other. It is appropriate, after all, for the less good soul to aspire to the memory of the activities of the other, particularly when it is respectable itself; for a given soul could be better from the beginning, or become better by education received from
10 the superior soul. | But in any case that one should be glad to forget the things that come from the inferior; one may after all envisage the possibility that, even when the one soul is good, the other may be worse by its nature, while being forcibly restrained by the other. And indeed to the extent that it strives upward it forgets more things—unless perhaps all its life even here was somehow such that it has
15 memories only | of better things. In this connection, the remark about "standing apart from human concerns"[19] is most apt: this necessarily comprises memories too. So

19 *Phdr.* 247c8–d1.

that anyone saying that the good soul is forgetful would be right in this sort of way. For it flees from multiplicity, and brings multiplicity together into one, | thus getting 20
rid of indefiniteness. In this way it is not involved with many concerns, but travels light and is focused upon itself; since even in this realm, whenever it wants to be in the other realm, it gets rid of everything that is other than it while it is still here; and when it is in the heavens it will get rid of more. For example, the Heracles we spoke of above[20] would talk about his past brave deeds, but the other Heracles would think these things unimportant, and when he has been transferred to a holier place, and has come to be in the intelligible realm, and to a degree surpassing the other Heracles prevails in the contests in which the wise contend,[21] . . .

4.1. . . . what will he say then? And in general of what things will the soul retain memory when it is in the intelligible and comes to be in that Being? It would be logical to say that it contemplates the things there and is active in relation to things there among which it is, and that otherwise it would not be there.

So then, will it remember nothing of this realm, as for instance that it | did philosophy, or indeed that while 5
here it contemplated what is there?

20 Sc. ch. 27, 7ff.

21 Porphyry has chosen for some curious reason to divide the treatise in two at this point.

But, if it is not possible, when focusing on something in intellection, to do anything other than think it and contemplate that thing—and indeed there is no place in intellection for the concept of "having exercised intellection," but one could only say this later, if occasion arose, and that would be proper to an entity which has
10 experienced a change—| there could be no question of someone purely established in the intelligible realm having any memory of things that once happened to him as an individual here. If, further, as seems to be the case, every act of intellection is timeless, the things there being in eternity and not in time, it is impossible for there to be memory there, not only of things here, but of anything at
15 all. Everything there, | after all, is permanently present, for there is no discursivity, or passing from one thing to another.

What then? Is there not going to be any process of division from above into kinds, or from below any ascent to the universal and what is above? Even granting that it does not happen in Intellect since it is all together in actuality, yet why will it not happen in soul when it is there?

20 But what prevents even this soul from having | immediate apprehension of things that are unified?

Well, would that be a view of it as something that is all together?

Yes, in the way that all acts of intellection are of many things all together. Since the object of contemplation is varied, its intellection of it is varied and multiform, and the acts of intellection are multiple, like many perceptions of a face with the eyes, the nose and the other features | being seen at the same time.

But what happens when it divides up and unpacks some one concept? Well, it is already divided in Intellect. This kind of thing is rather like having a point to focus on. Before and after in Forms does not consist in time, and its intellection of before and after will not be in time either. But there is before and after in arrangement, as in a plant there is an arrangement starting | from the roots as far as the top, which for the person who looks at it has before and after in arrangement only, as he looks at the whole simultaneously.

But when a soul looks at one thing, and then takes in many things, and the totality of them, how did it have one first and another next? The answer is that the power, which is one, is one in such a way as to be many things when it is in something else, and does not apprehend everything in one act of intellection. | The activities take place as a whole, but they are always all there in a potency which is stable; whereas in the rest of reality, when <many things> come to be, <they are not all always actualized>; for already that object of intellection, as not itself being one, was able

to receive into itself the nature of the many which were hitherto non-existent.[22]

2. But enough of that. How about, though, the remembering of oneself? The fact is that one will not retain memory of oneself, nor will one remember that one is oneself the contemplating agent, as for instance Socrates, nor that one is intellect or soul. In that connection, one should bear in mind that when one indulges in contemplation in this realm, and especially when one does so | with maximum clarity, one does not then revert to oneself in the thinking, but while retaining consciousness of oneself, one's activity is directed toward that, and one becomes that, making oneself available to it in the role of matter, taking on the form of what one is looking at, and at that time being oneself only potentially.

So is a person then anything in actuality, when he thinks nothing?

If he is himself, he is | empty of everything else whenever he thinks nothing. But if he is himself such as to be everything when he thinks himself, he thinks everything at once. And so such a person, with his attention focused on himself and seeing himself in actuality, has everything else included, and with his attention focused on everything he has himself included.

22 The text here is seriously disturbed, and the present translation is only probable.

But if he does this, he is changing | his mode of intellection, which we ourselves just now did not allow for.

Or should not one rather say that remaining in the same state applies to intellect, but in the case of soul, which is situated, as it were, at the lower edges of the intelligible, this (sc. alteration) can happen, since it can also advance further inward. For if something comes into being in relation to the permanently static, it must exhibit difference with respect to the permanently static, | not itself being static in the same way. On the other hand (sc. in the case of Intellect), we should say no change takes place when it moves from what belongs to it to itself, or when it moves from itself to other things. For it is itself all things, and both are one.

But is the soul, when it is in the intelligible, subject to having different aspects in succession in respect of itself and its contents?

No, when it is purely in the intelligible it too has the characteristic | of not being subject to change. For the soul is then identical with true being. For when it is in that place it must necessarily come to union with Intellect, since it has been turned to it. And having been turned to it, it has nothing in between, and when it has come to Intellect, it is fitted to it. And having been fitted to it, it is united with it while not being dissolved, but both are one, while still being two. | When it is in this state it would not change, but would be in an unchanging state in relation to

intellection, while having at the same time awareness of itself, as having become simultaneously one and identical with the intelligible.

3. But when it has departed from there and is unable to bear the oneness, but has become attracted to a state of its own, wishing to be other than it was, and, as it were, poking its head out, it is in consequence of this, so it seems, that it acquires memory. The memory of the things there above continues to restrain it from falling, but that of things
5 I here carries it in this direction, while that of the things in the heavens holds it there, and, in general, according as the focus of its memory alters, there it is and comes to be. Now remembering is either thinking or imagining, but its imagination does not consist in possessing something, but its disposition is such as the things it sees; and if it sees sensible things its low level will correspond to the
10 amount of them it sees. I Because it possesses all things in a secondary way, and not in a perfect way, it becomes everything, and being a boundary entity, and having its location in such a place, it is borne in either direction.

4. There in the intelligible realm it sees the Good through Intellect; it is not obscured in such a way that it cannot penetrate through to soul; for there what is between is not body, so as to be an obstacle. And indeed even when there are bodies in between it is often possible to arrive at

a third level of being | from the first. But if it gives itself to the things below it, it has what it wanted to an extent corresponding to its memory and imagination. Therefore memory, even if it is of the best things, is itself not one of the best things.

One must think of memory, after all, not only as covering the situation where one, as it were, has a perception that one is remembering, but also when one has a disposition in relation to previous things that have happened to one or | that one has seen. For it would be possible, even when one has no consciousness that one has a memory, to have it in oneself more strongly than if one knew that one did. For it could be that when one *knows* something, one would possess this as something different to oneself, while if one does not know that one has it, one may very well end up *being* what one has; and this latter condition makes the soul fall further.

But if, on departing from the upper region, | it somehow recovers its memories, it had them there too.

Well yes, it had them potentially, but the actuality of the things there made the memory disappear. For the memories are not after all like impressions deposited in the soul, in which case what happens would perhaps be absurd, but it is rather the case of a potentiality which was later subsumed into the actuality. So when the actuality in the intelligible ceases to be operative, the soul sees | what it had been in the way of seeing before it came to be there.

5. Well now, is it this power, by virtue of which remembering takes place, that brings even those things into actuality now?

Well, if we did not see them themselves, it does so by memory, but if we did see them, it does so by that with which we saw them there too. For this is aroused by the things by which it is aroused, and this is what sees in the
5 sphere of the | things we have talked about. One must not give an account of them using guesswork nor syllogistic argument which has its premises from elsewhere, but it is possible, as is said, to talk about the intelligibles even for those who are here, by means of the same faculty which has the power to contemplate what is there. For one must see what is there by arousing, so to speak, the same power,
10 so that one can arouse it there also. It is as if someone | raising his eye up to some vantage point were to see things which none of those who had not gone up with him could see. So memory, from what we have been saying, starts in the heavens, when the soul has already left the intelligible regions. So if the soul has come to be in the heavens, from here, and stops there, there is nothing surprising if it were
15 to have | memory of many of the things here, of the kind mentioned, and were able to recognize many of the souls it had known before, since it is necessary for them to have bodies around themselves of similar shape. And even if they change their shapes, making them spherical, would

they recognize them through their characters and the peculiarities of their behavior? | For that would not be absurd. Granted that they have put away their affections, their characters are not precluded from remaining. And if they were able to converse as well, they would recognize them that way too.

But when they come down from the intelligible, how do they remember? The answer is that they will stir up their memory of the same things, albeit to a lesser extent than those souls that have remained above; for | they will be able to remember other things, and the greater passage of time will have brought about complete forgetfulness of many things.

But if they have turned to the sensible world and fall into the world of becoming here, what kind of remembering will they have? Well, it is not necessary that they should fall to the lowest level. For in the process of their movement, it is possible to stop when they have proceeded | a certain way, and nothing prevents them from emerging again, before they have gone to the lowest level of becoming.

6. One would be justified, then, in saying that the souls that move from place to place and change will also remember; for memory is of things that have happened and have become past. But what would the souls that remain in the same place or condition remember? Our enquiry is also directed at | the memories of the souls

of all the stars, and particularly of those of the sun and moon; it will culminate by going on to tackle the case of the World Soul too, and will even have the audacity to concern itself with the memories of Zeus himself. In the course of investigating these questions, | it will look at what their discursive reasonings and calculations are, if they have any. If then they neither investigate nor have problems—for they need nothing, and they learn nothing which was not part of their knowledge before—what calculations or syllogisms or discursive reasoning would they have? But they would not even have thoughts and contrivances relative to human affairs | by which they will regulate things to do with us or generally things on earth. For the method of ordering things well that comes to the world from them is of a different nature.

7. Well then, will they not remember that they saw God?

The fact is that they always see him, and while they see him they cannot say that they *have* seen him; for that would be the experience of those who have ceased to do so.

What then? Will they not remember that they went around the earth yesterday or last year, or | that they were alive yesterday and long ago and indeed as long as they have been alive? No, because they are alive *always;* and the "always" implies one and the same state. But distinguishing the "yesterday" and "last year" in their motion would be

the same as if one were to divide into many a movement consisting of a single footstep, and made many of the one thing, one segment and then another. For in this case too there is a single movement; but with us | there is a reckoning of many and different days, because they are marked off by nights. But there, since there is only one day, how can there be many? And so there can be no last year either.

But, one might argue, the space traversed is not the same, but different, and the section of the zodiac is different. So why will it not say, "I passed through this section, and now I am in another"? And again, if | it looks on human affairs, why not on the changes that pertain to them, and that they are now other than they were? And if it sees this, it will see that men, and their affairs too, were different before. And so there will be memory.

8. No, it is not necessary either to lodge in the memory all the things that one contemplates, or that items that supervene entirely incidentally should ever reach the imagination. However, in the case of things where thinking and knowledge are operative to a greater extent, if these happen in a way that can be perceived by sense-perception, it is not necessary | to let the knowledge of them go and give one's attention to the partial sense-object, unless one is actually dealing with some particular thing, since partial objects are included in the knowledge of the whole.

What I mean by each of these points is this. First, that it is not necessary to store up what one sees in oneself. For when it makes no difference, | or when a perception that is stimulated, with no choice involved, by reason of the mere difference between things in one's line of vision, is altogether nothing to do with one, only sense-perception has had this happen to it, and the soul has not admitted it inside, in so far as it has no interest in the difference itself, either to meet some need or for any other good it might do. But when the soul's activity is entirely directed to other things, | it would not take up the memory of things of this kind when they have passed on, seeing as it does not cognize the sensation of them even when they are present.

The next point is that it is not necessary for things that happen entirely incidentally to reach the imagination, and that even if this were to happen, it would not be in such a way that it preserves them and watches over them, but the impression of a thing like this | does not produce awareness. One would understand this if one were to take what has been said above as follows: if it is never our purpose in moving locally to cut off first this piece of air and then that, or, *a fortiori*, to pass through it at all, there would be no question of observing it or any reflection on it as we walk along. Since if we had not had | the purpose of completing this part of a road, but rather to effect a passage through air, we should not have come to care on which stretch of ground we were, or how much we had

traversed; and if we did not have to move for a particular length of time, but only had to move, and we did not refer any other thing we do to time, we would not have placed any succession of times in our memory.

It is a recognized fact that when the reason grasps an action as a whole and so assumes that it will be accomplished in its totality, one would not any longer focus on each segment of it as it happens. Further, when someone always does the same thing, it would be pointless for him to observe all the details of this same thing. If, then, the heavenly bodies, as they move, do so performing their own functions, and not with the aim of passing by all the things they do pass, and their function is not to observe what it is they go past, or the passing itself, their passage is incidental to them, and their mind is on other greater things, and these things through which they go are always the same, and their time spent in an interval of a given length does not consist in calculating it; even if their passage is in theory divisible, it is not necessary that there should be memory of the places they pass through, or of the times at which they did so. They have the same life, since their movement in space is around the same point, so that their movement is not spatial but vital, being that of a single living being directing its activity at itself, and being at rest in relation to what is outside it, but engaged in a movement which consists in the eternal life within it. Indeed, if one were to liken their movement to a dance, if

it is to one that at some time comes to a stand, the whole which has been completed from its beginning to its end would be complete, but each single part of it would not be complete; but if one compared it to the kind of movement that is always going on, that is always complete. And if it is always complete, | it has no time or place in which it will have been completed. And so it would have no desire for this; so that it will measure what it does neither by time nor space. And so it will have no memory of these.

If then these beings live a blessed life, and look on this life with their own souls, with this inclination of the souls themselves to one thing | and the illumination that comes from them to the whole of the heavens—like strings on a lyre vibrating in sympathy with each other, they would sing a tune in some sort of natural concord—if the whole heaven and its parts were moved like this, with the heaven being moved in respect of itself, and different things moved in a different way with respect to the same thing because of occupying different | positions, then our account would be even more correct, since the life of all of them is one and similar to an even greater extent.

9. But Zeus who orders and manages and arranges all things for all time, with his "royal soul," his "royal intellect," and foresight of how they will happen, and who, when they are happening, has control of them and organizes them, rolls out their many | cycles and brings

them to completion—how in the midst of all this would he not have memory? When he contrives and checks and works out how long the cycles have been and what they were like, and how they would occur for the future as well, he would surely be best of all at remembering, even as he is the most skilled craftsman.

Now the question of the memory of the cycles I would present a serious problem in itself, about what their number would be, and whether he would have knowledge of this number. If their number is limited, that will involve giving a beginning in time to the world; but if it is unlimited, he will not know the number of his deeds.

The answer is that he will know them as a unity, and that they constitute always one single life—for that is how it is unlimited—and he will know that not externally, but by his very functioning, I this kind of unlimitedness being always present to him, or rather following along with him and being contemplated by a cognition that is not extraneous. Just as he knows the unlimitedness of his own life, so he will know that his activity directed toward the universe is one, but not that it is directed toward the universe.

10. But since what orders the world is double, we speak of one aspect of it as the Demiurge, and the other as the Soul of the Universe, and when we talk of Zeus we are sometimes referring to the Demiurge and sometimes

to the controlling principle of the universe. In the case of the Demiurge, we must remove altogether the notion of before and after and give him one unchangeable and timeless life. But the life of the cosmos which contains the controlling principle still requires discussion, asking whether this too does not have its life in reasoning, or in considering what it must do. For what it must do is already known and is set in order, without having ever been set in order; for things that have been set in order are things that have happened, but what makes them happen is the order itself. This is the activity of a soul that depends on an intellection that remains as it is, of which the order in the soul is an image. And since that higher one does not change, it is necessary that this soul does not change either. For it is not the case that it looks there sometimes, and at other times does not look, for if it stopped doing so it would find itself at a loss; for it is one soul and has one function. For what controls is one and it always rules, not ruling sometimes and at other times being ruled, for where could more controlling principles come from, such as would result in conflict or uncertainty?

In fact, what manages is one and always wants the same thing; for why should it want a succession of different things, so that it would not know what to do in the face of their multiplicity? And yet, even if it were to change, while maintaining its unity, it would still not be involved in uncertainty. For just because the world has many parts

and oppositions between the parts, it would not thereby be in a state of uncertainty about how to organize them. For it does not begin from the last entities, or the parts, but from the first principles, and beginning from the first principle it goes on to everything by a route free from impediments | and orders them, and rules them for this 25
reason, that it sticks with one and the same task, and is itself the same thing. But if it wanted now one thing and then another, where would the other come from? And then it will be at a loss as to what it must do, and its work will be weakened as it proceeds in its reasoning to a state of uncertainty about what to do.

11. For the management of the universe, as in the case of a single living being, is of two kinds, one which starts from the outside and the parts, but another that starts from the inside and the first principle, like a doctor who starts from outside, and part by part, and often does not know what to do and deliberates, whereas nature starts | 5
from the principle and has no need of deliberation. Now the management of the universe and its manager must not, in exercising control, proceed in the manner of the doctor, but rather like nature. In the management of the universe there is simplicity to a much greater extent, in so far as it relates to all things that are included as the parts of a single living being. For one Nature rules all natures, and these | 10
follow, attached to it and dependent on it, and grow forth

from it, as it were, as the natures in the branches depend on the nature of the whole plant. So what role is there for reasoning, or counting, or memory, when wisdom is always present, working, ruling and managing in the same way?

Just because the things that come to be are varied and different, after all, one must not | suppose that what makes them happen undergoes in consequence the changes in what happens. On the contrary, to the extent that the things that come to be are varied, to that extent does what makes them remain in the same state. For in an individual living being the natural developments are many and do not all happen together, such as the different stages of growth, the things that sprout at given times, like horns, beards, and | the development of breasts, maturity, reproduction: the earlier rational principles are not lost, but others are added; this is clear from the fact that the complete rational pattern is present in turn in the animal that is engendered. And indeed it is right to equip it (sc. the World Soul) with the same wisdom, and that this should be the universal and, as it were, permanent | wisdom of the world, being many and varied and yet the simple wisdom of one very large living being, not changed by the multiplicity, but a single rational principle and all together; for if it were not all things, it would not be that wisdom, but the wisdom of subsequent beings and parts (of the whole).

12. Perhaps someone might say that this kind of function belongs to nature, but that the wisdom inhering in the universe must possess reasonings and memories.

But that is the position of men who take it that being wise consists in not being wise, and who have come to believe that seeking | to be wise is the same as being wise. For what else would reasoning be if not seeking to find wisdom and an account which is true and which hits upon that which is the case? The man who reasons is like someone playing the lyre with a view to achieving the art of lyre-playing, or who practises in order to acquire an ability, and generally like one who learns with a view to achieving knowledge. For the reasoner | is seeking to learn what makes the man who already has it wise; so that wisdom inheres in one who has already come to a stand. The man who has been reasoning can bear witness to this: for when he has found what he needs, he has as such ceased reasoning; and he came to rest when he arrived at the state of being wise. If then we are going to put the controlling principle of the universe in the position of those who are learning, we must assign it | the reasonings, problems, and memories of one who compares the present with the past and the future. But if we are going to put it in the position of one who knows, we must believe that its wisdom is in a state of rest resulting from the possession of its target.

Then, if it knows things in the future—to say that it does not know them is absurd—why will it not know |

how they will come about? And if it knows how they will come about, what need will it still have of reasoning and comparing the past with the present? And knowledge of things in the future, if one grants that it has it, would not be such as prophets have, but such as producers have
25 who are confident that their products | will come to be, which is the same as to say those who are in all respects in control and for whom nothing is uncertain or arguable. Those, then, who have a fixed opinion tend to retain it. So wisdom about the future is the same, in respect of staying as it is, as is that about the present; and this is outside the sphere of reasoning.

But if it does not know the things in the future which
30 | it will produce itself, it will not produce by knowledge or by looking to some pattern, but it will produce whatever comes its way: and that is the same as to say, at random. So that according to which it will produce remains permanent. But if that according to which it will produce remains permanent, it will not produce otherwise than in the likeness of the pattern that it has in itself. So it will produce
35 in a single way, and in the same way. | It will not produce now in one way and later in another, or what is there to prevent it from failing? But if what is being produced is to be different, it is different not on its own account but because it is in thrall to reason-principles. These derive from its producer, so that it is subordinated to reason-principles that follow in due order from above. And so the

producer is in no way forced to wander at a loss or | to be in difficulties or have problems, as some have thought, on the assumption that the management of the world is troublesome. For "having trouble," it seems, consists in trying to perform tasks which are not one's own; that is, relating to things of which one is not in control. But for things of which one is in control, and in sole control, what should such a one need other than himself and his own will? | But this is the same as his own wisdom, since for such a one his will is wisdom. So such a one has no need for production, since neither is his wisdom not his own, but he uses nothing extraneous. Therefore, we should note, he does not use reasoning or memory; for these things are extraneous to him.

13. But how will this kind of wisdom differ from what we call nature? Surely this will be because this wisdom is a thing of the first order, and nature of the last; for nature is but an image of wisdom, and being the lowest phase of the soul, it has the lowest kind of reason-principle reflected | in it, as if in thick wax an impression on the surface were to come through to the furthest wax on the other side, with that on the top being clear, but that on the bottom being merely a weak trace. Thus it does not know, but merely produces. For giving what it has to what comes next to it, with no choice involved, its giving to what is corporeal and material just is its production, even as, | for instance,

what has been itself heated gives its own form to what is in contact with it and next in order, thus making it hot to a lesser extent.

For this reason nature does not possess imagination either. Intellection, however, is superior to imagination; and imagination is intermediate between an impression of nature and intellect. The former has no cognition
15 or consciousness of anything, but imagination has | consciousness of what comes from outside: it allows one who has an image knowledge of what has happened to him. But thinking is itself a production and an activity that comes from the very thing that exercises the activity.

So intellect possesses it, but the soul of the universe eternally acquires it and has always acquired it, and its life consists in this, and what appears to it from time to time is the consciousness of a thinking soul. And what is
20 produced | from it as an image seen in matter is nature, in which existent things find their place, or even prior to this, and these are the last things that belong to the intelligible; for what comes next is the realm of images.[23] But nature acts on matter and is affected by it, but that soul which is before it and contiguous to it acts but is not
25 affected, and the one that is even higher does not act | on bodies or on matter.

23 Cf. Plato, *Tim.* 50c.

14. Of the bodies that are said to be produced by nature, the elements are just that, bodies, but are animals and plants produced in such a way that they have nature in them, as it were juxtaposed? It is as in the case of light: when it has departed, air | has none of it, but the light is as it were apart, and air is apart from it as not being mixed with it. Or is it rather as in the case of fire and what has been heated: when the fire has gone, some kind of heat remains, being other than the heat in the fire, a sort of condition of what has been heated. For one must say that the shape which nature bestows on what has been created by it is a form | other than nature herself. But we must consider whether the body has something else apart from this, which is as it were between this and nature herself. What the difference is between nature and what is called the wisdom in the universe has already been stated.[24]

15. But there is this problem about everything we have just said. For if eternity relates to Intellect and time to Soul—for we say time by its very essence relates to the activity of soul and derives from it—how, since time is divided up | and has a past, would not the psychic activity be divided too, and in turning back to the past produce memory in the World Soul? And further we say that sameness is characteristic of eternity and otherness of

24 Cf. chs.12–14 above.

time, otherwise eternity and time will be the same thing,
10 even if we are not prepared to attribute mutability to | the soul's activities.

Shall we perhaps then say that our souls, seeing as they admit of change and in particular are characterized by a sense of deficiency, are things of a kind to be in time, but that the Soul of the Whole generates time, without itself being in time? But assume that it is not in time: what
15 is it that makes it generate time | but not eternity? The answer is that the things it generates are not eternal, but are encompassed by time; for even souls are not in time, but some of their experiences and actions are. For the souls are eternal, and time is subsequent, and what is in time is inferior to time; for time must comprehend that which is
20 in time, just as is the case, as he (sc. Aristotle) says, | with what is in place and what is in number.

16. But if in soul one thing comes after another and there is prior and posterior in its productions, and if it produces them in time, it will incline to the future as well: if so, then to the past too.

5 The answer is that prior and | past are in things that are produced, but in the soul nothing is past, but all the reason-principles are there simultaneously, as has been said.[25] But in things produced there is non-simultaneity,

25 Cf. ch. 11, 26–27 above.

since there is no being together either, though things are together in the reason-principles, like the hands and feet in the reason-principle; whereas in sensible objects they are apart. And yet there | too[26] there is separation in another way; and so there is priority too, in another way. Indeed someone might say that being separate is there by virtue of otherness. But how could there be priority, unless what orders things were to be in charge of this? And being in charge, it will prescribe one thing after another. For why will all things not exist simultaneously? The answer is that they will not if what orders and the order are different, in such a way that it can, as it were, issue prescriptions. | But if the first order is what is in charge, it is not yet prescribing, but only produces this thing after that. For if it does issue prescriptions, it prescribes looking to an order. And so it will be other than the order.

So in what way is it the same? It is because what orders is not matter and form, but only form and power, and Soul is a secondary activity after Intellect. And the condition of being one thing after another inheres | in things that do not have the power to do everything simultaneously. This kind of soul, however, is a noble thing too, like a circle coinciding with its center and expanded immediately after the center, an interval without extension; that is how each of them is.

26 Sc. in the intelligible realm, or rather, in this case, at the level of pure soul.

Now if someone were to put the Good in the center, he would put Intellect in the place of a circle that is not moved, but Soul in that of a | circle that is moved, but moved by desire. For Intellect has immediate possession of what it wants and encompasses it, but Soul desires what is beyond being. But the sphere of the universe, since it has its soul desiring in that way, moves in the way that it desires by its nature. And as a body, its nature is to desire what is external; | and this involves embracing it and surrounding it on all sides with itself. And that is why it moves in a circle.

17. But how is it that the soul's intellections and reasonings are not in us too in the same way, but here they are involved in temporal succession, with the consequent necessity for investigations? Is it because the ruling and stimulative principles are multifarious, and there is no one thing that is in control?

Yes, and also because now one thing and then another controls our attention, in relation | to our needs and to the circumstances, and it is not determined within itself, but always relates to a succession of different things which are on the outside. Hence our intentions are different and suited to the moment when the need is present and this or that particular thing has happened on the outside. Indeed, from the fact that a multiplicity of things are controlling us it follows that our images are many, and extraneous,

and new one | to the other, and get in the way of the movements and activities of each individual. For when the desiring faculty is moved, the image of what moves it comes as a sort of perception which announces and gives information about the affection, and asks the soul to follow it and provide the thing desired. But the other part of the soul necessarily finds itself in a difficulty both in the case that it gives in | and provides what is asked for, and if it resists. And the spirited faculty when it calls for help does the same thing when it is moved, and the needs and affections of the body drive us to a series of different opinions. So too do ignorance about what is good, and the soul not knowing what to say when it is drawn in all directions, and different opinions arising from the combination of these things.

But what if it is | the best part of us that has different opinions? No, having difficulties and different opinions belongs to the compound. The correct reasoning from the best part when conveyed to the compound is weakened because it is in the mixture: it is not so by its own nature, but it is as when the best of counsellors speaks in the great commotion of an assembly but does not prevail, but | rather the worst of those who make a commotion and shout do so, while the other sits in silence, able to do nothing, overcome by the commotion of the worse. In the worst man, the individual is identified with the compound, and the man is made up of everything, as in some bad constitution. In the

average man, as in the city, something good could prevail
30 when a democratic | constitution is not out of control.
But in the better man there is the rule of the best, when
the man now avoids the compound, and gives himself to
better things. But in the best man, the one who separates
himself, the ruling principle is one, and the order in the
other parts is derived from this. It is like a city that is
35 double, a higher one and one | consisting of the elements
below, but ordered in conformity with what is above.

But we have now explained that in the World Soul there is unity and sameness and likeness, and that in the other souls the situation is different, and why. So much, then, for that.

Fifth Problem: The Joint Activities of Body and Soul (chs. 18–29)

18. Now for the question whether the body possesses anything on its own account, and brings some distinctive quality of its own to the life bestowed on it by the presence of soul, or whether what it has is simply nature, and this is what it is that associates with the body, namely nature.

The answer is that the body itself, in which there is
5 soul and nature, | must not be the same kind of thing as
what is soulless, or that air is when it has been lit, but rather
like air that has been warmed: the body of an animal, or
indeed of a plant, has something like a shadow of soul,

and pain and taking pleasure in the pleasures of the body is the business of the body so qualified; but the pain of this body and | this sort of pleasure come to the notice of our self (*hémeis*) for dispassionate cognition. By "our self" I mean the rest of the soul, in so far as even the body so qualified is not another's, but belongs to us; wherefore it is of concern to us, as belonging to us. For we are not this, nor yet have we been purged of it, but it depends on us and is suspended from us, | whereas we exist in respect of our chief part, but nevertheless that other entity is ours, though in a different way. Therefore it is of concern to us when it is experiencing pleasure and pain, and the more so the weaker we are, and to the extent that we do not separate ourselves from it, but hold this part of us to be the most valuable, and take it as the true man, and, as it were, submerge ourselves into it.

For we must say that affections of this kind are not at all | those of the soul, but belong rather to the body so-qualified and some compound and dual thing. When something is a single thing, then it is, as it were, sufficient to itself. For example, what affection would a body on its own undergo if it had no soul? For if it were divided, it would not be itself that is being divided, but the unity in it. But soul on its own would not be affected even in this way, and being such | escapes every such experience. But when two things want to be one, since they have this unity as something extraneous, it would be reasonable to say that

the origin of pain for them consists in not being allowed to be one. I mean here not two as if there were two bodies, for in that case there is only one nature involved; but when one nature wants to share something with another, and a thing of another kind, and the worse takes something
30 from the better, | and that cannot take the better itself, but only some trace of it, and in this way too it comes to be both two things and one, stuck between what it was originally and what it could not have, it generates a problem for itself, since it has acquired a transitory association that
35 is not secure, but always borne in opposite directions. | And as it fluctuates upward and downward, on its being borne down it proclaims its pain, and as it moves up its desire for the association.

19. This, then, is what is called pleasure and pain. We say that pain is cognition of the body's withdrawal as it is being deprived of the image of soul, and pleasure the living being's cognition that the image of soul is once again taking
5 its place in the body. The affection | is at that level, but the cognition belongs to the sensitive soul that perceives in its position adjacent to that level, and makes a report to the part which is the ultimate recipient of sense-perceptions. It is that other, though, (sc the body) that feels the pain. By "feels the pain" I mean "has undergone the affection"; as in the case of a cut, when the body is cut the division is
10 in respect of its mass, but | the discomfort is in the mass

because it is not just a mass, but a mass duly qualified. The burning is there, but it is the soul that perceives it, taking it to itself because it is, as it were, located next to it. And the whole soul perceives the affection there without itself being affected; for, receiving the perception itself as a whole, it declares that the affection is there where the wound and the pain are.

But if the soul itself had been affected, being in the whole body, it would not have said or passed information that the affection was there, but all of it would have suffered the pain and it would have been hurt as a whole, and would not have declared or indicated that the pain was at that level, but it would have said that it was there where it was itself; and it is everywhere. But as it is the finger hurts and the man hurts, and the man hurts because the finger is the man's finger, but we say that the man hurts in his finger, as we say that the man is "gray" because of the grayness of his eyes. So it is the part that is affected that hurts, unless one takes "hurts" as including the succeeding perception. If one does take it together, though, one clearly means this, that "pain" is to be taken along with the pain's not failing to come to the attention of sense-perception. In fact, though, we must call the sensation itself not pain, but rather a cognition of pain, and say that since it is a cognition it is free from affection, so that it can cognize and give a sound report. For a messenger who has undergone an affection

and has his concentration fixed on that affection either fails to report altogether, or is an unsound messenger.

20. It follows that we should make the beginning of bodily desires arise from the compound—in the sense we have discussed—and the particular nature of the body. For we must not attribute the beginning of appetition and wanting to the body in just any condition, or the quest for salty or sweet things | to the soul itself, but to that which is body, but wants to be not just body, but has also acquired movements to a greater extent than the soul, and because of this acquisition is forced to turn in many directions. So when it is in one state it looks for salty things, and for sweet things when it is in another, and for being heated or cooled: | such things would not be of concern to it if it were on its own. And just as in that case the cognition rose from the pain and the soul, in wanting to take the body away from what was producing the affection, caused flight, and the part that first underwent the affection somehow teaches it flight by its own contraction, so here sense-perception has acquired information, | and also the soul close to it, which we call nature, which gives the trace (*ikhnos*) of soul to the body, and nature learns about the clearly-defined desire that is the end-product of the desire that arose in the body, whereas sense-perception sees the image, as a result of which the soul, which is responsible for provision, is either already providing what was desired,

or resists and endures and does not pay attention either to the originator of the desire, | or to the part that has taken on the desire after this.

But why do we talk about two desires and not say that what desires is only that, the body so-qualified?

The answer is that if nature is one thing, and the body so-qualified that has arisen from nature is another—for nature exists before the body so-qualified comes into being, for she produces | the body so-qualified by moulding and shaping—it follows necessarily that nature does not initiate the desire, but that what does is the body so-qualified which has undergone a particular affection, and suffers pain as it strives for the opposites of what it is experiencing, or alternatively pleasure after the pain and fulfilment after the want. But nature, like a mother, as if it were aiming at what | the thing affected wants, tries to put things right and bring it back to herself, and as it seeks for what will cure the condition it tries to connect its search with the desire of what has been affected, and to ensure that the fulfilment of the desire comes back from that to herself. And so one can say that the desire comes from the body itself—one might perhaps call it "pre-desire" | or "fore-desire"—but nature derives its desire from something else and through something else, and that which either sees or does not see to the satisfaction of the desire is another soul again.

21. That it is in this (sc. the body) that the origin of desire is to be found is evidenced by the different age groups. For the bodily desires of children, adolescents and adults are different, and different again when they are healthy and when they are sick, while the desiring faculty is the same in all cases; for it is clear | that it is by virtue of being corporeal and a body so-qualified as to undergo all kinds of change that it is subject to desires of all sorts. The fact that the whole desire is not in every case roused by the so-called fore-desires, though the bodily desire persists right through, and that before reasoning takes place one does want | to eat or drink, tells us that the desire extends to a certain point, to the extent that it is in the body so-qualified, but nature does not join in or attach itself or want to bring it into nature's purview, as if it were not in accordance with nature, in so far as she would be in control of what is contrary to nature and what is in accordance with it.

If someone were to object to the previous argument | that the body by becoming different is sufficient to produce different desires for the desiring faculty, he does not adequately deal with the fact that while it is another thing that undergoes an affection, the faculty has different desires, and in a different way, since what is provided is not being provided for it. For certainly neither the nourishment, the warmth, nor | the moisture, nor the alleviation when the body is emptied, nor the satisfaction when it is filled,

relate to the desiring faculty: they all belong rather to that of the body.

22. In the case of plants, is the echo, as it were, of soul in them one thing and what structures this echo another, that is, what in us is the desiring faculty but in them the vegetative one; or is this in the earth, since there is soul in the earth, and what is in plants is a derivative of this?

| One might first consider what soul is in the earth, whether it comes from the sphere of the universe, to which alone Plato seems to have given soul in the first place as a kind of illumination directed to the earth, or once again when he says that the earth is "the first and most senior of the gods within the heavens" (*Tim.* 40c2) one might consider whether he is giving it a soul such as the one which he gives to the stars. | For how would it be a god, if it did not have that soul? And so it turns out that it is difficult to discover how things are in this case, and that the difficulty is increased, or not diminished, as a result of what Plato says.

But first let us ask how one might reasonably state the situation. That the earth, then, has a vegetative soul one would infer | from the things that grow from it. But if many animals too are seen to come into being from the earth, why would one not say that it is an animal as well? But if it is so large an animal, and no small part of the whole, why would one not say that it has intellect as

well, and in this way is a god? And if each of the stars is
20 a living being, why should not the earth too be | a living being, since it is a part of the whole Living Being? For one must not say that it is held together from the outside by a soul that is not its own, but does not have one inside, as not being able to have a soul that is its own. For why should things made of fire qualify for this, but not what is made of earth? For each of the two is a body, and not even there (sc. in the stars) are there sinews, flesh, blood
25 or fluids. And yet | earth is a more varied thing, being composed of all the elements. And if it is objected that it is resistant to movement, one could say that this relates to its not being moved from its place.

But how does it perceive? Well, how, for that matter, do the stars? Sense-perception is certainly not something that is confined to flesh, nor in general must we give body to soul so that it might perceive, but rather we must give
30 soul | to body so that the body may exist and be preserved in existence. Since soul is possessed of judgment, it can look at body and make a judgment about its affections. What then are the affections proper to the earth, and what would its judgments be about—since even plants, inasmuch as they consist of earth, do not have sense-perception? What then does the earth perceive, and by
35 what means? Or can we not | venture to say that there can be perceptions even without organs? And in any case, of what use is sense-perception to the earth? Not, at any rate,

for the purpose of acquiring knowledge. For the power of thinking is presumably sufficient for things that derive no advantage from sense-perception. Yet one might not be prepared to grant this point. For apart from the question of usefulness, there is | a kind of cognition in the area of 40
sense-objects which is quite intellectually enjoyable, like that about the sun and other things in the sky and about the heavens and the earth: perceptions of these things are pleasurable in themselves.

But we may consider this question later.[27] Now we must again ask whether the earth has perceptions, of what the perceptions might be, and how they would happen. Before that, however, we must take up the difficulties raised | and consider in general whether it is possible 45
to have sense-perception without sense organs, whether perceptions are useful, and whether anything else ensues from them apart from the usefulness.

23. Now we may take as a premise that sense-perception is the apprehension of sense-objects either by the soul or by the living being, with the soul understanding the quality that attaches to bodies and taking an impression of their forms. In that case the soul either apprehends them alone on its own, or together with something else. | But 5
if it is alone and on its own, how can it do so? For if it is

27 Sc. below, ch. 24, 1–14.

alone it will apprehend merely what is within itself, and all that will take place will be intellection. If it apprehends other things too, it must first have taken hold of them either by assimilating itself to them, or by consorting with something that has been assimilated to them. But while it stays on its own it cannot be assimilated. For how could a
10 point, let us say, be assimilated to a line? | After all, not even would the intelligible line fit with the sensible one, any more than the intelligible fire or man would fit with the sensible fire or man, since not even the nature that produces the man comes to be identical with the man that has come into being.

But soul on its own, even if it were possible for it to focus on a sensible object, would end up with the understanding of an intelligible one, with the sensible
15 object | escaping it, since it does not have the wherewithal to grasp it. After all, when the soul sees a visible object from a distance, even when it has come to the soul as far as possible as a form, although when it arrives at the soul it is at first like something without parts, yet it finishes with the underlying colour and shape, when the soul sees everything that is there. So there must not be these things
20 only, the external item and | the soul; for then the soul would not be affected. But what is going to be affected must be a third thing, and that is what will receive the form. And it must share the affections of the objects and have similar affections, and be of the same substance, and

this must be the affected element, while the other (sc. the soul) does the cognizing, and the affections must be of such a kind as to preserve something of what has produced it and yet not be identical with it, | but, in so far as it is 25
between what has produced the affection and the soul, it must have its affection situated between the sensible and the intelligible as a mean proportional, somehow connecting the extremes with each other, being at the same time able to receive and to report, and fit to be assimilated to each of the two. For being the instrument of cognition, it must not be the same as | either what cognizes or what is going 30
to be cognized, but suited to being assimilated to each of the two, to the external one by being affected and to the internal one by its affection becoming a form.

If, then, what we are now saying is sound, sense-perception must take place through bodily organs. Indeed this is a consequence of the fact that soul, when it has come to be completely | outside body, apprehends nothing that 35
is sensible. The organ must be either the whole body, or some part of it reserved for a particular function, as in the case of touch, on the one hand, or sight, on the other. One can see, after all, that artificial tools serve to mediate between those making judgments and the things that are being judged, and report to | the maker of the judgment 40
the particularity of the underlying objects; a ruler, for example, connects the straightness in the soul with that in the wood, being placed between the two, and so gives

the craftsman the ability to judge the object he is crafting. But the question whether what is to be judged must be immediately connected to the organ, or whether it will judge by means of some medium, when the sense-object
45 stands at a distance, | for example if the fire is a long way from the flesh, with what is between not being affected, or whether, if there were some sort of void between the sense of sight and the colour, it would be possible to see so long as the organ is available for the sense, is matter for another discussion. However, it is at any rate clear that sense-perception belongs to soul in body, and happens by means of body.

24. The next question is whether sense-perception has to do only with need, and that merits consideration along the following lines.

If the soul on its own were agreed not to have sense-perception, but the senses are related to the body, then sense-perception would exist because of the body, which is also the source of perceptions, and sensing would be bestowed upon the soul because of its association with
5 the body, and | it would either follow necessarily—which is what happens to the body, with the affection, when attaining more than a certain magnitude, reaching as far as the soul—or it has contrived to take precautions before what produces the affection becomes too great, so that it causes destruction, or even before it comes near. And if

this is so, perceptions would be related | to a need. For even if it is also related to knowledge, sense-perception is designed for a thing that is not in a state of knowledge, but is afflicted with ignorance through some unfavorable circumstance, and also so that it should recollect because it has forgotten: it is not for an entity that is subject neither to need nor to forgetting.

But in that case our question should concern not only the earth, but also all the stars, and indeed the whole heavens and the cosmos. For according to our present argument, parts | would have sense-perception in relation to other partial entities which are also subject to affections, but what sense-perception could there be for the whole in respect of itself, when it is, in all parts of itself, free from affections in respect of itself? After all, if one part is to be the organ of what perceives and another part, distinct from the organ, is to be what it perceives, but the all | is a whole, it would not have one part through which sense-perception takes place and another which can serve as its object. We may grant it consciousness of itself, just as we have consciousness of ourselves, but we must not accord it sense-perception, which is always of something else; just as when we apprehend something in our body alien to what is normal, we apprehend it | as something coming from outside.

But, one might argue, just as in our case there is not just apprehension of what comes from outside, but one part

internally apprehends another, what is there to stop the world seeing the moving sphere with the unmoved one, and with this in turn looking at the earth and its contents? And if these things are not free from other affections, what is there to stop them having the other affections too, and
30 what is there to stop | sight being not only of the fixed sphere in its own right, but being like that of an eye which tells the World Soul what it has seen? And even if it is free from other affections, why would it not see like an eye, being a luminous being with a soul?

"But," he says,[28] "it had no need of eyes." But if this
35 is because nothing visible had been left | outside it, yet there was something visible inside, and there is nothing stopping it seeing itself. But if it was because it would have been "pointless"[29] to see itself, let us grant that it did not come to be like this primarily for the purpose of seeing, but that it is a necessary consequence of the world being as it is. Why would not such a body, translucent as it is, have the capacity of seeing?

25. One may reply that having a medium by means of which one can see is not sufficient for it to see and to have sense-perception in general, but its soul must be so disposed as to incline to sense-objects. *Qua* soul, however, it has the characteristic of always being concerned with

28 Plato, *Tim*. 33c1–2.
29 *Tim*. 33d4.

the intelligible realm, and even if it were possible for it to have sense-perception, | this would not happen because it is focused on superior things, since sights and other perceptions do not come to our attention either when we are seriously concerned with intelligible realities, at the time when we are so concerned; and as a general rule, if one is concentrating on one thing, other things do not obtrude on one's attention. And after all, to want to apprehend some part with some other part, as if one were to look at oneself, is superfluous | even in our case, and if it is not for some purpose, quite pointless. To look at something else because it is beautiful to look at is a sign of being prone to affection and deficiency.

And smelling and tasting flavours might be identified as encumbrances and disturbances of the soul. One might say of the sun and the other heavenly bodies, after all, that they see, and hear, only incidentally. If one suggests that | they direct themselves to sense-objects by means of both senses, such an hypothesis may not be unreasonable. But if they did turn to them, they will necessarily have memory of that. After all, it is unreasonable not to remember the good things one does. So how do they do good if they do not remember?

26. They have knowledge of prayers because they are linked to this realm by a kind of connection and in accordance with a certain relationship, and their actions in

response to prayers come about in this way too. In the arts of magicians also everything depends on such connectivity; this is so because of powers that follow according to the rules of sympathy.

5 | If this is so, then, why should we not grant the earth sense-perception? But what kinds of perception? Why should we not give it touch, in the first place, of part by part, with the perception being sent up to the controlling part of the soul, and then to the whole the touch of fire and the other elements? After all, even if its body is difficult to move, nonetheless it is not immovable.

10 The perceptions, though, | will not be of small things, but of big ones.

But why would that be?

Because if soul is present in it, the greatest movements necessarily will not escape its notice. There is nothing, after all, to prevent perceptions taking place for this purpose, that it should order well the affairs of men, to the extent that human affairs are in the province of the

15 World Soul—and it would order them well by virtue of | a sort of sympathy—or that prevents it from hearing us pray and assenting to our prayers, albeit not in the way that we do, or from being affected, in respect of itself, by other perceptions.

And what about other things, relating to smells and tastes, for example? The answer is that it perceives the objects of smell by virtue of the smells of juices and

other fluids, for its provision for living beings and for the constitution and maintenance | of its own bodily element. 20 And one must not require that it has the organs that we do: for it is not even the case that all animals have the same ones; for example, not all have ears, and yet those that do not still have apprehension of sounds.

But as regards sight, how can it have it, if sight requires light? For we must not expect it to have eyes.

Well, if we concede to it a faculty of growth, we could agree that this has it either because the faculty of growth is primarily situated | in a life-spirit (*pneuma*), or, because 25 it is the life-spirit—in which case why should we doubt that it is also translucent? Rather we must accept that, if it is life-spirit, it is translucent, and, when it is lit up by the circuit of the heavens, it is translucent in actuality. And so there is nothing absurd or impossible about the soul in the earth seeing. And we must reflect that it is the soul of | no mean body, so that it would be a god; for its soul 30 must always be good in every way.

27. If then it gives plants their reproductive soul—whether it gives the reproductive soul itself, or the reproductive soul is in it and the one in plants is a trace of this one—the plants would be like flesh that is already ensouled, and have acquired, if they possess it, the reproductive soul in themselves. | Being in them, it gives 5 the body of the plant what is better in it, that by which it

differs from a plant that has been cut away, and thus is no longer a plant, but only, say, a piece of wood.

But what does the soul give the earth's body itself?

One must not think that a body of earth is the same when it has been cut off from the earth as when it remains
10 continuous with it, as is shown by stones | that grow as long as they are attached to the earth, but remain at the size that they were when they were cut off and removed from it. So one must believe that every part of earth has a trace of soul, and that the whole vegetative soul runs over this: it no longer belongs to one part or another, but to the whole; and following on that, there is the nature of the
15 sensitive faculty, | which is no longer "mixed up with"[30] body, but rides on top of it. Then comes the rest of the soul and the intellect: this soul men, employing divine terms and invoking a nature which prophetically reveals things of this kind, call Hestia and Demeter.

28. So much, then, for that. But we must go back and consider the power concerned with spiritedness and the passions, asking whether, just as we situated the origin of the desires, and pains and pleasures—the affections, that is to say, not the perceptions—in a certain state of body,
5 one that has been, as it were, | infused with life, we should similarly attribute the origin of spiritedness, or the whole

30 *Phd.* 66b5.

of it, to the body when it is in a certain state, or to a part of the body, for example the heart in a certain state, or the bile, in a body that is not dead; and also, whether, if there is another source for it, spiritedness derives from the "trace" of soul, or indeed does spiritedness alone constitute this thing (sc. the trace), and does not any longer derive from | the vegetative or sensitive soul. For in that case | the vegetative faculty, being in the whole body, gave the trace to the whole body, and pain and pleasure were in all of it, and the origin of the desire for satisfaction was in all of it. We did not mention the origin of the desire for sex, but let us assume that it is in the parts that fulfill such desires. | Let us assume that the area around the liver is | the origin of desire, because that is where the vegetative faculty, which provides the psychic trace to the liver and the body, primarily exercises its activity. It is there, because it is there that the activity starts.

But as for the faculty of spiritedness, we must ask what it is and what kind of soul is involved, and whether it provides from itself a trace around the heart, or something else | which in the end produces a movement in the | compound, or whether in this case it does not provide a trace, but the being angry itself.

First, then, we must consider what it is in itself. It is clear enough, after all, that we become angry not only in response to sufferings afflicting our own body, but in response to what happens to someone else connected

with us, and in general about any actions committed | contrary to propriety; hence, for the manifestation of anger, we require sense-perception and a certain degree of understanding. So anyone looking at these facts would not look for the impulse to anger to arise from the vegetative faculty, but rather for anger to derive its origin from some other source. But when we observe that the proclivity to anger follows from bodily dispositions, and | that those whose blood or bile boil are prone to anger, and those who are said to be without bile and cold are relaxed in respect of anger, and that wild animals have outbursts of anger in respect of their bodily constitution, and not in response to an appearance that some other person has been wronged, one would again be inclined to attribute outbursts of anger to the more bodily component, and to the structuring principle of the animal in question.

And again, when | the same persons are more irascible when they are sick than when they are well, and when they have not partaken of food than when they have, such phenomena indicate that anger, or the origins of anger, belong to the body so-qualified, and the bile or the blood act as if they supplied soul, and provide movements of such a kind that, | when the body so-qualified is affected, the blood or the bile are immediately set in motion, and when perception has taken place, the imagination brings the soul into contact with the disposition of the body so-qualified, so that it directs itself to what is causing the pain. But on

a higher level, the reasoning soul, when an injury appears to have been committed, even if it does not involve the body, has this angry element, such as we have described it, ready to hand, naturally adapted as it is to make war against anything that has been shown to be hostile, and makes it its ally.

There is one kind of anger, then, that is stimulated without reason and drags the reason with it by means of the imagination, and the other that starts from the reason and terminates in that the nature of which it is to be angry. Both derive from the vegetative and reproductive part of the soul, which makes the body such as to apprehend things that are pleasant and painful, and that is what causes it to have bile and be bitter. And it is by virtue of the trace of soul being in a body of such a kind that feelings of discomfort and anger are stimulated, and by reason of its being injured first it seeks itself to injure, in some way, the others as well and, as it were, to assimilate them to its own situation. Evidence for this being of the same substance as the other trace of the soul is provided by the fact that those who strive less for the pleasures of the body and in general despise the body are less prone to anger.

One should not be surprised that trees do not experience spiritedness, though they have the vegetative soul: this is because they have no share in blood or bile. If they did have these without sense-perception, there would be only a boiling and a kind of irritation, but if they had

sense-perception there would then be an impulse toward what was doing them the wrong, so as to retaliate.

But if the irrational part of the soul were to be divided into the desiring and the spirited part, and one of them were the vegetative soul, with the spirited part a trace (*ikhnos*) coming from it, in the area of the blood or the bile, or the combination, this division into two would not be valid, since the one would be prior and the other posterior.

The answer to that is that nothing prevents both being posterior, the right division being of two things deriving from the same source. The proper division to be made is of types of appetition, as such, and not of the substance from which they have come. That substance is not in itself a form of appetition, but perhaps we might say that it brings the appetition to fulfillment by connecting to it the activity that comes from itself. And it is not absurd to say that the trace that emerges to produce spiritedness is to be found around the heart; for that is not to say that the soul is there, but we may say that the origin of the blood in a certain state is there.

29. How then, if the body is like something that has been heated and not something that has been lit up, does it have nothing that gives it life when the rest of the soul has departed?

The answer is that it does for a short time, but that that dies away rather quickly, as happens with things that have been heated when they have been moved away | from the fire. Evidence for this is that on dead bodies hair grows, and nails grow longer, and animals that have been cut in two can move about for quite a while. This is perhaps due to the part of soul that gives life still being in them. And yet even if it does depart together with the rest of the soul, that is not proof that it is not different from it. For indeed when the sun has departed, it is not just the light | which is adjacent to it, derived from it, and attached to it that goes away, but also the light that derives from that light, and is seen on the outside of it in the things near it, which departs together with it.

Does it then depart together with the other, or is it destroyed? We must consider this question both in the case of light of this kind and also in that of the life in the body, | which we say is proper to the body. It is clear that none of the light remains in things that have been lit. But our discussion is asking whether it goes back to what produced it, or simply ceases to exist.

How, then, can it come simply not to exist, when it existed before?

But what, in general, is it? In the case of the light we call color, it does not exist when the bodies | from which it comes have themselves changed—in cases where the bodies are perishable—and no one asks where the color is

when the fire has died down, just as they do not ask where its shape is. Indeed the shape is a kind of relation, like the clenching or extension of a hand, but color is not like this, but like | sweetness. For what is there to prevent the sweetness not being lost when a sweet body perishes, or the fragrance when a fragrant body does, and coming to be in another body, but not being perceptible because the bodies which have gained a share of them are not of such a kind as to make the qualities that have come to attach to them impinge | on the senses? So in this way the light of bodies that have perished remains, but the resistance that derives from them all does not. Unless someone were to say that we see by convention,[31] and that the so-called qualities do not exist in the underlying objects. But if this is so, we shall make qualities imperishable and not come to be | in the structure of bodies. And we shall say that it is not the formal principles in seeds that produce colors, as in the case of multi-colored birds, but that they assemble them when they exist already or produce them, but do so by using in addition those in the air, which is full of such things; for in the air they are not such as they appear to be | in bodies, when they come to be in them.

However, let us leave this problem lie at this point. But if when bodies remain as they are, the light is attached to them and has not been cut off, what prevents it being

31 An apparent echo here of Democritus, Fr, B 125 Diels-Kranz.

moved elsewhere with the body, when the body is moved elsewhere, both the light contiguous with it and any other that might attach to the contiguous light, even if it is observed going away, just as it does not appear | as it approaches?

But in the case of soul, whether the secondary phases of it follow the first one, and those that come next always follow the ones that precede them, either each of these being on its own and deprived of those prior to them that are able to remain on their own, or in general whether no part of the soul has been cut off, but all souls are one and many, and what is the | manner of this, is something that has been discussed elsewhere.[32]

But what about that which is a trace of soul and has already come to belong to a body?

Well, if it is soul, it will follow along with the soul's reason-principle, if it has not been cut off from it. But if it is a kind of life of the body, the same argument applies to it which produced a problem about the semblance of light; as to whether it is possible for there to be life without soul, except it be by the soul being located | alongside and exercising its activity in the direction of something else, this still requires examination.

32 An apparent reference to the early tractate IV.9 [8], "On the Question Whether All Souls are One."

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Commentary on Ennead *IV.3*

Chapter 1, 1–16

The treatise begins with a statement of the overall subject matter: the soul, as both subject and object of investigation.

1, 1–16 That the soul is the best, and most important, subject for discussion (4–6), and the key to understanding ourselves, is a thesis maintained throughout Neoplatonism. We may compare, for instance, Ps.-Simplicius [Priscian], *Commentary on Aristotle*, *On the Soul* 1, 4–5: "The primary and most important object of study is the truth about things themselves, and in particular concerning the soul, which is the most relevant for all of us." The word here translated "enquiry" (*pragmateia*) was the standard term

for a philosophical work in Neoplatonic writings, but is already used in this sense by Aristotle (cf. e.g., the opening words of the *Topics*, 1.1, 100a18).

1, 1–6 The opening sentence of the treatise constitutes an excellent statement of Plotinus' aim in composing his works. Typically, his treatises start from an *aporia*—e.g., in *Ennead* IV alone, IV.5—actually an appendix to the present treatise: "Is it, or is it not, possible to see without any medium?"; IV.7 [2]: "Is it the case that each of us is immortal, or conversely perishable, or is part of us immortal and part perishable?"; IV.9 [8]: "Is it the case that, even as we maintain that each individual soul is one, so all souls are one with one another?"

It is notable, and typical of Plotinus' approach to philosophy, that he should recognize that the honest admission that some problems may not admit of solution is a valid conclusion of philosophical investigation. It is characteristic of him to avoid facile solutions to difficult problems that his Middle Platonist predecessors had tended to settle with rather glib formulations. The whole area of freedom and determinism is a case in point, cf. his treatment of *Enn*. III.2–3 [47–48], as against e.g. Alcinous, *Didaskalikos*, ch. 26. Another would be the question of the relation of individual souls to the All-Soul and/or the World Soul, the first problem addressed in the present treatise.

1, 6–8 *There are many reasons for this*: Plotinus remarks elsewhere that the soul is on the boundary of the sensible and intelligible worlds, e.g. at IV.8 [6] 7, 5–7, and IV.4.3, below. He may also have in mind the beginning of Aristotle's *On the Soul* (402a4–7), where Aristotle says that the study of souls contributes to the study of truth and nature: to Plotinus the former would mean Intellect (cf. V.5 [32] *passim*), the latter the soul of the sensible world, reinforced by the phrase "for it is a kind of principle of living things."

1, 8–9 *The injunction of the god*: The Delphic injunction to "know thyself" was a favorite with Platonists, who most often referred to Plato, *Alcibiades* I 132c, where it is also linked with a question about the soul, or at least the need to care for it (cf. too 124a). We should note, however, that Alexander of Aphrodisias also refers to it in the course of his own treatise *On the Soul* (not the commentary to which later writers refer), and makes the further points that Plotinus makes too, that in knowing the soul we are learning about ourselves, and that we shall thereby be obeying the god (*On the Soul* 1, 4–2, 4). We know from Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus* (14, 10–14) that Alexander was read in Plotinus' "seminars": whether or not the *hypomnemata*, "notes" or "commentaries," which Porphyry mentions would cover *On the Soul* is uncertain, but it is not impossible that Porphyry regarded the work as commentary, just as later commentators, with

less justification, were to treat Plotinus' views on the soul as if they too were commentary on Aristotle's *On the Soul* (cf. esp. Ps.-Philoponus, *Commentary on Aristotle*, *On the Soul*. 3. 535, 1ff.).

1, 10 In an earlier treatise (V.1 [10] 1, 31–33), Plotinus had written that it is soul that conducts an investigation, and that it must know what it is so that it can have prior knowledge of whether it is capable of undertaking the task in hand.

1, 12 *The desired object of contemplation*, *Intellect*: Intellect is the highest goal in contemplation. We adopt here the emendation of E. R. Dodds, *theama tou nou*, "object of contemplation, which is intellect," in place of the mss. reading *theamatôn*, "of objects of contemplation," which would necessitate emending the positive *eraston*, "desired," to a superlative, such as appears never to occur in surviving texts. In any case, Intellect is what is intended. The mss. reading (along with the superlative), we may note, could be also taken to refer to the One, which is sometimes described as an object of contemplation (cf. VI.9 [6] 10, 20–21; V.5 [32] 4, 7), though it is more often cognized by other means, e.g. by "concentrated intuition" (*epibolê athroa*), cf. III.8 [30] 9, 21–22. When Plotinus does speak of intellect contemplating the One, earlier in that treatise,

he points out that, when it does so, it does not see it as One (*ibid.* 8, 30–31).

1, 13–14 *For there is a duality, as we know*: The precise meaning of this elliptical non-sentence is not clear, but the duality in Intellect presumably refers to its containing both a subjective and an objective aspect (cf. V.3 [49]). Plotinus would then be saying that it is reasonable to assume that, among particular intellects, one might place more weight on one or other of these aspects than another; but how precisely this connects with what precedes or follows is obscure.

1, 14–15 *How it is that we receive the gods*: "God" can have a variety of meanings in Plotinus, referring not only to the One and Intellect, but also to Soul and even to the cosmos. On its various meanings and some of their history, cf. esp. Rist 1962, 169–180. Here it must mean the higher intelligibles, the intellects and true beings (forms) that are the components of intellect, but it remains, if so, a rather peculiar way of referring to them. The term *hypodokhê*, "reception," we may note, is used elsewhere by Plotinus eleven times, mainly in III.6 to refer to the Receptacle of the *Timaeus*, and never elsewhere to refer to reception by the human soul of the gods; in Iamblichus' *De Mysteriis*, on the other hand, we find fully sixteen instances of it, mainly with reference to this, in a theurgic context. It is

not easy to know what to make of this, if anything. What part of the present treatise he is referring to here is not entirely clear, but he may be thinking simply of the section IV.3.9–23, within which chs. 11 and 14 in particular address the topic to some extent.

First Problem: Relation of Individual Souls to All-Soul (chs. 1, 16–8, 60)

This comprises the first aporia, or problem, with which Plotinus proposes to deal in this treatise, namely the relationship of the individual souls to the All-Soul (there is an extensive commentary on these chapters in Helleman-Elgersma 1980, 171–455). It is a peculiarly difficult question, as Plotinus, while he is determined that our souls are not simply "parts" of the All-Soul, recognizes that they cannot be entirely independent of it either. Indeed, he is prepared to entertain the idea that the "lowest," most basic soul-function, the nutritive or growth-function, actually derives directly from the World Soul—not, of course, the hypostasis Soul—and constitutes a sort of substratum for the higher soul (cf. in particular ch. 7 below, as well as later in the treatise, at IV.4.18–29).

1, 16–18 *Now, however, let us turn once again*: This sentence in itself should be sufficient indication, in spite of hints to the contrary, that Plotinus himself did not regard individual

human souls as derived from the World Soul, a view still attributed to him by Gatti, 1996, 101. Plotinus' formulation ("let us turn once again," *palin epaniômen*) perhaps suggests that he was no longer satisfied with his treatment of the question in IV.2 [4], or in IV.9 [8], where possible answers are listed in ch. 1. 6ff.—though there may also be a conscious echo here of the beginning of Book II of Aristotle, *On the Soul* (412a4) where he is turning from an historical survey to a more analytic treatment of the subject. On some of the problems, cf. Blumenthal 1971, ch. 1, and the summary of various opinions in Helleman-Elgersma, 1980, 89–103. The identity of those who maintained the other view is not clear, and cannot be definitively established. Various candidates have been proposed, of whom the strongest are the Stoics (cf. *SVF* II 774 = Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Philosophers* VII 156 *ad fin.*), but the fact that they adduce Plato in their favor suggests rather some Platonists who were influenced by Stoicism. One might think of such a figure as the second-century Platonist Severus, who was read in Plotinus' seminar (*Life of Plotinus*, ch. 14), and who, as well as exhibiting other Stoicizing traits, such as a theory of successive world cycles, is attested (by Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospels*, XIII 17, who is quoting from Severus' treatise *On the Soul*) as maintaining a strongly unitary theory of the soul. More immediately, however (as indeed is suggested by Helleman-Elgersma, pp. 126–130), we might think of Plotinus' own senior follower Amelius,

who had come to Plotinus from a teacher, Lysimachus, who was a Stoic (Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus*, 3; 20), and who was a friend of the "Stoic-and-Platonist" Trypho (*ibid.* 17), and who is attested by Iamblichus, in his treatise *On the Soul* (ss. 19; 25 Finamore-Dillon) as maintaining a radical unity between all souls.

We must in any case bear in mind that Plotinus appears sometimes to have set up positions opposed to his own, or at least blurred the details of opponents' views, so that they can be refuted, cf. e.g., IV.7 [2] 3 and 6–8; and V.7 [18], a treatise in which it is not easy to be sure which views belong to whom. An important aspect of the position of these people that must be borne in mind is that, unlike Plotinus, they will not have made any distinction between the hypostasis Soul and the World Soul, so that his reply to them will also tend to obscure this distinction.

1, 18–37 There follow four arguments in favor of the derivation of our souls from the World Soul:

(1) It is insufficient to say that our souls have effects as far-reaching as those of the World Soul; their similarity to it is consistent with their being parts of it as a whole. Plato is claimed as subscribing to this view (cf. *Philebus* 30a3–8).

(2) The fact that we follow the rotation of the heavens shows that we have our souls from what contains us (cf. *Timaeus* 90c–d).

(3) In proportion as each part of us has a share in our soul, we as parts of it have a share in the World Soul.

(4) To say that all soul cares for what has no soul (cf. *Phaedrus* 246b6) means that there is nothing other than the World Soul, or All-Soul, that has charge of the soulless part of creation.

These arguments are refuted, in turn, in chs. 2–8.

1, 18–22 *They will perhaps deny*: Some light may be thrown on this position by Iamblichus' allegation, in his treatise *On the Soul* (s. 19), referred to above, that Amelius claims that "soul is *numerically* one and the same on every level," or (s. 25) that "the essence (*ousia*) of the soul is numerically one, but is multiple in its relations and assignments (*skhesesi kai katataxesin*)"—these "relations and assignments" being, presumably, to individual bodies. Even if this characterization of Amelius' position by Iamblichus be judged somewhat tendentious, it would seem to come close to the position here maintained. The opponents here, it will be noted, are not bothered that our souls "exhibit the same scope" (*phthanein mekhri tôn autôn*), and possess an equal endowment of intellect, as the soul of the universe; that does not, in their view, disqualify them from being parts of it.

1, 24–26 *So our soul is a part of the soul of the universe*: Though we usually translate *psykhê tou pantos/tou holou*, "the soul of the universe/the whole," as "World Soul," we retain the

literal translation where Plotinus is making specific points about parts belonging to the whole, or vice versa.

1, 26–27 *And they also maintain*: Perhaps an exaggeration of the point in the *Timaeus*, 90c7–d8, that we must try to conform to the movements of the cosmos. Plotinus is prepared to accept that our behavior is governed by the rest of the world, at least for the activities of the lower soul, cf. II 3 [53] 13, 34–47; the higher soul is exempt, cf. *ibid*. 15, 17–28.

1, 30–33 *And even as within us*: This third argument does not seem to rest on any particular passage or passages of Plato, though it could be seen as also relating back to *Philebus* 30a. It relies once again on an analogy between macrocosm and microcosm. The *hoper* of the manuscripts in l, 30 should probably be changed to *hôsper*, and we have so translated it ("even as"), but it could conceivably be a Plotinian anacoluthon.

We may note here, incidentally, that the first person plural pronoun "we/us" (*hêmeis*, etc.) seems to be being used at this stage in a "non-problematical," inclusive sense. Later in the treatise, however, as we shall see, "we" is used to refer to the soul proper in its embodied state, not the body, nor even the lower "trace" of soul that enlivens the body—that, as it turns out, is not "us," but "ours."

1, 33–37 *All soul cares for all that which has no soul*: Another appeal to Plato, this time to the well-known passage *Phaedrus* 246b6—a passage in which the phrase "all soul" (*pasa psyche*) received many different interpretations in later Platonist commentary. Plato doubtless intended it distributively ("each and every soul," "everything which is soul"), but it is crucial for the position of Plotinus' opponents that it be taken to mean "All Soul" in the sense of the soul of the universe. The sentence must then be understood as attributing to Plato the position that there is nothing other than the World Soul, which itself cares for all soulless creation.

Chapter 2

This chapter constitutes the first part of Plotinus' reply, and is directed against the argument in 1, 18–22. Plotinus first takes up the point that our souls are like the World Soul, arguing that this means that they belong to the same genus and so cannot be parts of it, and that both World Soul and individual soul must derive from the same source (2, 1–10). The rest of the chapter examines ways in which incorporeal entities can and cannot be said to be parts of wholes.

2, 1–10 In this section, Plotinus puts his finger on what he sees as a flaw in the reasoning of his opponents, in that they wish to claim that our individual souls and the World Soul are "of the same kind" (*homoeideis*), which means that they are species (*eidê*) of the same genus. That genus must be a soul that is superior to both, and itself not such as to be dependent on anything else, as are its two species. Thus their argument results, not in the subordination of our souls, as parts, to the World Soul, but rather the subordination of both to pure Soul, the hypostasis.

2, 3 *They give them the same common genus*: *Genos* is used here as if it were equivalent to *eidos*, "species," in the *homoeidê* of 1, 22 and 2, 1. By laying stress on the more technical meaning of *homoeidês* (a term presumably used by his opponents), it is possible for Plotinus to claim equally well that all souls belong to the same genus, with species, e.g. World Soul, rational soul, animal soul, plant soul; or that all belong to one species, partial souls in a genus Soul that includes the hypostasis.

2, 9 *Since it is a substance*: Plotinus is here making use of the Aristotelian principle that substance (*ousia*) alone of the categories is never predicated of, or in, anything else, cf. *Cat.* 2a 11–13. That some souls should sometimes incidentally belong to something else is entirely consistent with this characterization of them as substance.

2, 10–19 The second part of the response begins with the suggestion that the meaning of "part" should be clarified, as it applies to incorporeal or immaterial entities. Parts of bodies are excluded at the start. The nub of Plotinus' argument here is that, if an homoeomerous body, such as milk, which has the quality of whiteness, is divided into portions, then what is divided is the milk, not the whiteness, which is an *eidos*, or "form." Similarly, therefore, soul, if it were a material mass (*ongkos*) and divided, would be divided as to its matter, not to its form, which is what soul is. Therefore the opponents would have failed to establish that there are individual *souls* at all, if soul as a whole were divided into parts in any physical sense.

2, 12–15 *In the case of things whose parts are all alike*: *Homoiomerês*, "of like parts," is used in its normal Aristotelian sense, of bodies whose parts are of the same kind as the whole, e.g. flesh, cf. *History of Animals* I, 1. 486a5–6, and the list at 487a1–10.

2, 20–58 considers various ways in which things can be parts of wholes, first in bodies (20–30), and then in arithmetic (30–35), geometry (35–49), and the sciences (49–58).

2, 20–35 We now turn to the case of numbers, as his first example of non-material quantities. Here too the argument of the opponents will not work. Plotinus is here, of course,

thinking of "mathematicals," not of Form-Numbers, as they are not addible. In the case of the mathematical ten, the numbers of which it is made up are not the same as itself, i.e. ten is not made up of little tens, but rather of twos, or fives. So if we think of the World Soul as the Decad, for example, and individual souls as monads, then either the World Soul is just an assemblage of souls, or conversely, if it is Soul, then it is made up of units that are not souls.

2, 24–29 *But in the case of units and figures*: Perhaps Plotinus has in mind here the argument against particulars participating in Forms as parts in a whole, in Plato, *Parmenides* 131a–e.

2, 30–35 *For it is not a thing of quantity*: This view of the soul as a number is not simply an invention of Plotinus' for the sake of argument, but was held by Xenocrates, who defined soul as a self-moving number (Fr. 60 Heinze/165–77 Isnardi Parente). Though mentioned several times by Aristotle, e.g. *On the Soul* 404b27–30, the definition was not ascribed to Xenocrates by name in any extant text before Plutarch, cf. *On the Creation of the Soul in the Timaeus* 1012D (= Fr. 68 H/188 IP). Xenocrates is further credited with describing number as *monadikos*, "unit-like," by Themistius, *Commentary on Aristotle*, *On the Soul*. 31, 4–5 (= Fr.61 H/261 IP). Philoponus, *Commentary on Aristotle*, *On the Soul*. 32, 32–33 (= Fr. 60 H/181 IP), mentions Xenocrates

as one of those who made soul a quantity; the others may have been Pythagoreans, to whom the view of soul as a number is sporadically attributed. However, the relation of individual soul as a small number to World Soul as a larger one seems to be Plotinus' invention.

2, 31 *the other . . . a unit*: The other is the partial soul that the opposition claim to be a part of the whole.

2, 35–49 Plotinus now turns to the case of geometrical figures, which are in one way a more promising analogy from his opponents' point of view. If one considers the "parts" of circles or squares, however, the segments or triangles into which they respectively might be divided are not "of like kind" with their wholes; and even in the case of lines, which are divided into lines, though *homoeideis*, the parts differ from the whole in quantity, in a way more appropriate to a physical magnitude.

2, 47–49 *Even if it had originally existed as a whole*: The textual situation here is troublesome. With the text of some manuscripts, *ei mê arkhê tis pote ên pasa*, adopted by HS^2, this sentence would run: "unless the whole soul had been some kind of principle," hardly making partial souls comparable with the divided wine, which is wine just as much as the original quantity. It seems better to base ourselves on the text of the rest of the manuscripts, *ei tis*

pote ên pasa, modifying it in accordance with the translation of Marsilio Ficino, *et si qua ab initio fuerat universa*, to read *ei kai kat' arkhên tis pote ên pasa*. The comparison that Plotinus is making is with a store of wine that is divided into bottles, leaving no vestige of the unitary wine behind: similarly, the argument of his opponents would divide the whole soul into individual souls, leaving nothing behind to be the whole soul; and yet that is what his opponents wish to preserve. This argument, it might be said, is in a way the converse of that about the milk above; here the emphasis is on the total division of the wine, whereas there it was on the unity of the form of white.

2, 50–57 Plotinus' third point of comparison, that of an individual theorem to the whole science of which it is part, is much more promising. For the comparison of a single soul with the exercise of a particular piece of knowledge, cf. IV.9 [8] 5 and VI.4 [22] 16, 24–26. In both of these passages, however, the comparison is one that, it seems, Plotinus would entertain; here he sees difficulties with it, at least for his opponents. The soul as a whole will not belong to something else (*ouk estai tinos*), but will be "itself by itself," and that will not suit the soul of the world, which is what the opponents assume the All-Soul to be. In fact, what emerges from this comparison is a contrast between the transcendent hypostasis Soul and the individual souls,

including the World Soul, all of which "belong to something else," viz., their bodies.

2, 52 *Like a projection*: Projection, *prophora*, is an activity directed to the outside and a representation at a lower level of a self-contained activity (*energeia*), cf. I.2 [19] 3, 28–30; V.1 [10] 3, 7–9. *Energeia* may, however, also be used of an activity directed to the outside, cf. esp. the discussion of sense-perception in the appendix to this treatise (IV.5).

2, 56–57 *But would be itself by itself*: The small change from *aph'* to *eph' heautês* proposed by Kirchhoff, but already implicit in Ficino's translation (*penes*), should be accepted here. The former would mean that the soul derives from itself, which is not what Plotinus thinks even about the World Soul: with the change, we have the point that the soul is *in control of* itself, the natural antithesis to belonging to something else. "This soul" (57) is, of course, the World Soul, which is *of the world*.

2, 58–59 *But how, then*: As Igal points out ([1969], 365, n. 2), this last sentence should really be the first of the following chapter. The chapter divisions in modern editions, we must remember, are those of Ficino, not Porphyry.

Chapters 3–6

Plotinus now turns to address the third of the arguments set out in chapter 1, and does not return to the "corollary" of the first, which adduces the Philebus, *until ch. 7.*

The core of the argument in ch. 3 is that, since our souls have a unifying center of consciousness, analogous to that which we must assume for the World Soul, they cannot be simply parts of that entity, as the various senses are "parts" of our soul, in that they cannot themselves form synthetic judgments, but must report their findings to a central consciousness.

3, 1–3 *Well, are they perhaps parts*: That the soul in any part of the body is a part of that body's soul is a consequence of a materialist conception of the soul, and is criticized at length in IV.7 [2] 7 and IV.2 [4] 2. The Stoics are the most obvious holders of the view, but we should remember that Plotinus' refutations are often apparently directed against a thesis rather than a particular person or group. See further Blumenthal, 1971, 72–74.

3, 3–5 *But this account would either involve*: Some over-translation seems necessary here, specifically of *all'* ("but"), in l. 4, which we have rendered "with the consequence that." Some translators have preferred to understand *pasan*, "all (soul)" as referring to the All-Soul, but that would really

require a definite article before it, and it is in any case not what Plotinus wants to say—he draws that conclusion in what immediately follows.

3, 6 *This we must investigate in due course*: This will be done at the beginning of ch. 4. "Scenario" is literally *eikôn*, "image": the question is in what sense, if any, a soul could be called a part.

3, 8–9 If the soul were divided, it could not make all of itself available to anything, and so what it provides would not be soul.

3, 9–10 *But if it remains the same, it will be present everywhere as a whole*: A literal translation of the text as it stands would give: ". . . but the same soul will be present as a whole everywhere," which makes no sense after what precedes. The problem posed by this much-discussed sentence can be solved by Igal's suggestion [1969], 364–366) that we understand, or supply, *ousa*, "being," or *menousa*, "remaining," with *hê autê*, "the same," and take it in the same conditional sense as the participle in the previous clause (*diairetheisa*, "if it is divided"). Thus, 9–10 give what Plotinus thinks is the correct position, as opposed to the one that would result from assuming the individual souls are divisions of the World Soul. The presence of the whole soul everywhere had been extensively discussed in VI.4–5 [22–23], *passim*.

In l. 10, *zôois*, "living beings," should probably be understood with *pollois*, but Plotinus may simply mean "in many things," and so be making a more general point.

3, 12 *that have the same capacity*: i.e. to receive soul. When Plotinus is talking in terms of the soul above *physis* coming to a body, he will say that the kind of soul a body has depends on the extent that that body is suited to, or able to, receive it, cf. esp. VI.4 [23] 3, 10–11. With this interpretation of *dynameôs*, the words *eisi gar amphoterois hapasai*, "for all the powers are in both," which HS² follow Theiler in transposing from l. 17, make no sense here. See further Igal, [1969], 367, n. 2.

3, 15 *Division of this sort is proper to other things*: This kind of division was maintained by the Stoics, cf. e.g. *SVF* II 826.

3, 16–18 *But rather that the same thing is present*: This can be said because for Plotinus all the powers of the soul are present in every part of the body and its organs, but only one or more is active at any given location—or time. Cf. VI.4.11, 12–14, and the discussion of sense-perception in IV.3.23, below.

3, 19–20 *Since the soul is capable of shaping everything into concordance with a form*: We offer this translation of the words HS print as *eis eidos panta dynamenon morphousthai*,

regarded as corrupt since Bréhier (though not by Cilento), and would suggest that the problem can be solved by the small change of *dynamenon* to *dynamena*, agreeing with *organa*. The thought would then be that what enables the soul to perceive forms is the organs' being able to become like the forms, a basic tenet of Plotinus' theory of sense-perception, cf. ch. 23, 18–33 below. *Dynamena* could easily have been changed to *dynamenon* by a copyist with his eye, or mind, on *eidos.* (The alternative *dynamenês*, agreeing with *psykhês*, proposed by Theiler, and adopted by Armstrong, is also possible, though the corruption is somewhat more difficult to explain.)
Morphousthai, "be conformed to," corresponds to the term Plotinus generally uses, *homoiousthai*, "be likened or assimilated to," cf. IV.4.23, 21–31.

3, 20–5 *Everything must go to one point of reference*: Punctuating with a comma after *ienai*, "go to," as suggested by Igal, [1969], 368. That all sensations converge, that they come through organs with different capacities, and that the organs are different while the judging faculty is the same, are all part of the same point. All this is grammatically the subject of the verb *dêloi*, "show." That cognition is a kind of reception is, of course, Aristotelian: sense-perception is a reception of perceptible form without matter, *On the Soul* II 12, 424a18–19.

If the analogy were preserved, therefore, and our souls were parts of the World Soul in the same way that our sense-faculties are "parts" of our soul as a whole, then our individual souls would possess no critical faculty of their own, but would be dependent on the World Soul for processing and evaluating our sense-data; which is absurd.

"Everything," *panta*, in l. 21 can easily be understood from the previous sentence and need not be supplied, as by HS², following Beutler.

3, 24 *While the judgment is made by one same judge*: For cognition being a judgment exercised on affections of sense organs, cf. the previous treatise, III.6 [26] 1, 1–4, and IV.4.22, 30–32.

3, 26 *has been said above*: sc. in ll. 9–10, but also extensively discussed in *Enn.* VI.4–5.

3, 28 *If intellection belonged to each soul*: Soul is independent in intellection because that is a function that does not require body for its exercise: the presence of body, in both subject and object, is what distinguishes sense-perception from intellection, cf. esp. IV.7 [2] 8, 1–7. The discursive reason also functions without using the body, hence the language of parts is inapplicable to it too. It is perhaps worth noting that for Plotinus *logikê psyche*, "rational soul," generally refers to reason as opposed to intellect, whereas

later Platonists use it to include both, while insisting that the intellect is not transcendent, cf. e.g. Ps.-Philoponus, *On Aristotle*, *On the Soul*, 446, 5–13, Ps.-Simplicius, *On Aristotle*, *On the Soul*, 6, 12–15.

3, 29–31 *But since in fact the soul is rational*: The whole tendency of this argument has been to show that, if the individual souls are made analogous to the individual senses, then only the All-Soul will be able to make judgments; but in fact individual souls are rational, and make judgments; so individual souls cannot be *parts* of an All-Soul, but rather the same as it.

Chapter 4

A reply to the objection that, if all souls are one, the soul will be both in body and outside body, if it is true that our souls leave our bodies periodically, and that of the world does not.

4, 1–3 What is one to say, though, if the soul is one like this: This would indeed constitute a problem for Plotinus' position. He seems prepared first to entertain the suggestion, derived from certain previous Platonists, that the human soul in fact always has a body of some sort,

whether pneumatic or earthy, but settles rather for the solution that the World Soul and individual souls must be seen as relating to their bodies in different ways. In this connection, he presents us with the notable images of the Great Plant, and of the healthy man and the sick man. The point behind these comparisons is that, in the case of a well-disciplined individual, the rational soul will be only minimally distracted by the demands of its irrational part, and to that extent more akin to the World Soul, in its relation to its body.

4, 6 As often, Plotinus refers to the views of "some," rather than specifying his adversaries. Their identity is unclear. HS in their apparatus criticus say "perhaps Stoics," but there is no clear correspondence between the position Plotinus reports and a Stoic doctrine. Igal's similarly tentative suggestion that there is an allusion to *ekpyrôsis* here has the disadvantage that the soul does not detach itself from the world in that condition, cf. e.g. *SVF* II 605. Theiler's suggestion that Plotinus has in mind some proponents of an astral body theory is more attractive, since we do in fact know of certain Platonists prior to Plotinus, mentioned by Iamblichus in his treatise *On the Soul* (§26: 378 Finamore-Dillon), who held this doctrine, notably "Eratosthenes and Ptolemy the Platonist."

4, 8–12 Plotinus' apparent concession that there could be parts of intellect is in fact no concession since, as he explains it, the so-called "parts" of intellect are inseparable and in the last resort identical. "Otherness" is a common Plotinian description of what distinguishes things otherwise indistinguishable, be they hierarchically arranged forms of immaterial being, as Intellect and Soul, or the horizontal divisions of such a being. On the use of this notion, cf. Rist [1971], 71, Blumenthal [1974], 207, Beierwaltes [1972], 174–177; in later Platonism it became almost a principle in its own right, cf. Beierwaltes, ibid. 179–188.

Andrew Smith [1981], 101 and 106, n. 7, draws attention to the way Plotinus tends to avoid using *khôris*, "separately," and its cognates, of Intellect. The present passage should perhaps be removed from his list of texts where Plotinus does accept the notion, since it could be argued that separation by otherness is not real separation.

4, 13 Around bodies here translates *kata sômata*, with *kata* having its distributive sense. The phrase comes from *Timaeus* 35a, where Plato uses *peri ta sômata*, as Plotinus generally does. Plato's division of substance (ousia) into indivisible and "divisible about bodies" is the basis of one of Plotinus' ways of describing soul: on its own, it is between the entirely indivisible substance, which is Intellect, and that divided about bodies, which is the individual soul, cf. IV.1 [4] 1, 11–55: divisible because it descends, indivisible

because it does not all descend, cf. IV.2 [21] 9–22. What each degree of divisibility represents, and where the soul belongs, is set out most clearly by Porphyry, Pathways to the Intelligible 5. On the Neoplatonic interpretation of *Timaeus* 35a, see still Schwyzer [1935].

4, 20 Just as light as soon as it arrives at the earth is divided up among houses: At first sight *oikous*, "houses," looks strange, and the text has been questioned. HS_1 and HS_2 wonder if this should not be changed to *ongkous*, "masses," and this is an attractive suggestion, but while the notion of division of light among houses is, at least, unexpected, it need not be removed from the text. It would have seemed less strange to Plotinus' Greek readers if they knew a passage from Marcus Aurelius (*Meditations* XII 30) to which Armstrong, ad loc., draws attention, where Marcus talks of light being divided by walls, mountains, and countless other things. Houses also occur in connection with light in an argument against those—Stoics, cf. *SVF* II 863–872—who would explain vision by the stretching of air, Alexander (?), *Mantissa* 132, 7–10. With the idea of soul radiating like light cf. Plotinus' comparison of it with the radii of a circle at IV.2.14–17.

4, 24–25 Because they have a part cut out for them: What is meant by having "a part cut out for them (*aphôrismenon autais to meros*)" that requires care? The reference is perhaps

to the individual ensouled body, which had a lower soul, or life-force, supplied by the World Soul, to which the individual soul is assigned by Providence. More will be heard of this later in the treatise, at IV.4.18ff.

4, 26–33 The one is like the soul in a large plant: We have here one of Plotinus' more striking images. The comparison of individual human souls to maggots (*eulai*) in a rotten part of a plant might seem unduly derogatory, but Plotinus does not seem to mean it in that way; he is focusing rather on the individuality of the maggots within the larger whole of the plant. We have added "our" to "ensouled body" (29): it is fairly clear that this is what Plotinus means here, and elsewhere too *empsykhon sôma* refers to the body to which the individual soul becomes attached, cf. e.g. III.6.12, 12–16; IV.7.8[5], 2–5. Our ensouled body, controlled by an individual soul, is contrasted with the superior body of the world, hence the comparison with the diseased portion which may be attacked by pests, as opposed to the "healthy" part of the plant, representing that part of the world which is not "colonized" by individual souls. Plotinus does not normally speak of the World Soul as having upper and lower sections, as he does in the case of the individual soul; he seems to do so here for the sake of his analogy.

4, 33–37 The higher soul's attention to what is below is not mandatory, and can in any case be exercised without becoming involved with what is below, cf. e.g. IV.4.20, 3–20, and esp. I.2 [19] 5. That is the point of the analogy with the healthy individual being engaged in action or contemplation: our faculty of discursive reason (*dianoia*) can direct itself "upward" or "downward"—the latter, however, betokening an unhealthy concern with bodily matters.

Chapter 5

Further arguments against the thesis that there are no individual souls because all souls are parts of one.

5, 1–5 In this connection, Plotinus produces an important principle of his metaphysics, to the effect that individual rational souls are projections (*logoi*) of individual Forms or intellects (*noes*) in Intellect, and they do not lose their individuality because those intellects do not lose theirs: "nothing that really is perishes" (l.5) is his way of expressing this.

5, 3 *Will it still belong to an individual in respect of its lower part*: The remote demonstrative *ekeinos*, "that, the one there," and the adverb *ekei*, from which it is formed,

particularly the latter, are frequently used by Plotinus to indicate "higher" reality and the world "above," and often specifically to refer to Intellect rather than Soul. The point of the question is to ask whether it is only the lower part of the individual soul that actually belongs to the individual, while its higher part is an unindividualized "part" of all soul. But that, answers Plotinus, would lead to the—for him clearly undesirable—consequence that Socrates, for instance, will only exist when his soul is in the body. The context makes it clear that here this means not simply during an incarnation, but when the soul is involved with the body. Socrates, it should be said, is Plotinus' preferred example when he is discussing the extent and status of individuals, cf. V.7 [18], *passim*, and VI.3 [44] 9, 27–32 in contexts similar to the present passage. The majority of references to Socrates are to be found in the treatise on the categories, VI.1–3 [42–44], and most of those in VI.3.

5, 4–5 *To the highest degree among what is best*: That is, when the individual has raised himself as far as he can, and is in the intelligible to the greatest possible extent.

5, 5–18 This, with some remarks in the following chapter (6, 15–17), is one of only two places in the whole of this treatise that bear on the vexed question of whether or not Plotinus believed in Forms of individuals, the other being IV.3.12. We persist in the view that Plotinus never came

to a final conclusion on this matter: for further discussion, see Rist [1963], Blumenthal [1966], with a revised version in [1971], taking account of Rist [1970], Armstrong [1977], Gerson [1994], 72–78. Rist, Armstrong, and Gerson offer a solution that sees texts apparently denying the existence of Forms of individuals, such as V.9.12, V.5.6, 4–15, and VI.5.8, 39–46, as either being consistent with them while talking about species Forms, or as applying to Forms other than those of humans, while those that accept Forms of individuals, particularly V.7, accept only those of humans, or (Gerson, 75–76) individuals with intellect. Armstrong [1967] 249, has suggested that the acceptance of Forms of individuals is a manifestation of Plotinus' high estimate of human personality (argued in 1977, 64–67); one suspects that Plotinus was too good a philosopher to be satisfied with a thesis so open to a charge of inconsistency.

As for the present passage, it contains several statements that can be taken in more than one way. Let us look at them in turn:

ll. 5–6: that nothing that really exists is lost perhaps most naturally means that everything has its own Form, since what really exists, *onta*, generally refers to the contents of Intellect. But the thesis could also be maintained on the basis of nothing being lost from the intelligible in general, so that it is only something at the level of Soul that needs to be permanent.

ll. 6–8: again, the statement that intellects are not lost can most readily be understood of the individual intellects that are the contents of Intellect; all of them are also real beings and Forms, cf. V.9 [5] 8, 3–7; V.I [10] 4, 20–28. Once more, existence at the level of Soul would satisfy the requirement, and elsewhere Plotinus will talk about intellects as being in the intelligible when he is discussing the intelligible as a whole, without distinguishing Soul from Intellect (on the circumstances in which he proceeds thus, cf. Blumenthal [1974], 210–217), cf. e.g. VI.4. Difference by otherness, on which cf. note on ch. 4, 8–11 above, can apply at any level of the intelligible, either vertically between levels or horizontally between their constituents.

ll. 8–14: The souls that come next (*ephexês*, l. 9) could be either souls in Soul, depending on an intellect in Intellect, or individual souls depending on an intellect in Soul. Two further problems arise in this sentence. First, "souls depending on each intellect" may mean that each soul has its own intellect—the more likely alternative—or that groups of souls each have their own *single* intellect on which they depend. Thus souls of men could depend on an intellect = Form of Man, those of lions on an intellect = Form of Lion. If the first alternative is the correct one here, then Plotinus is talking about Forms of individuals; if not, he is not. Secondly, to say that the souls are representations (*logoi*) of intellect, and further deployed, may mean that each soul is simply an unfolding of what exists in a more

compact form in its intellect, or again, that a single intellect has spread into several souls, a distinct possibility in view of the pyramidal structure of the whole in Plotinus' world. "Being in contact with something which is less"—as opposed to many—"and less divided" is again capable of being interpreted in two ways.

5, 12–14 *They want to be divided*: This must be read in the light of Plotinus' classification of different levels of being in terms of divisibility or lack of it, cf. on 4, 13 above. Souls cannot become entirely divided, because that is the condition of body and not of soul.

5, 14–18 It has sometimes been suggested that this "summary" (*kephalaion*) is, together with a similar one also so designated at III.6.3, 27, a relic of the *kephalaia* added by Porphyry to all the treatises except I.6 [1], cf. *VP* 26, 32–37. There is no good reason to believe that just one or two isolated relics remained from so large a number of such *kephalaia*, particularly since Porphyry himself edited the text we have. For a full discussion of these *kephalaia*, and the likelihood of their appearance in the text of Plotinus, cf. M.-O. Goulet-Cazé, "L'édition porphyrienne des Ennéades," in *PVP* I 315–321 and 323–325.

5, 15 *The souls come from one soul*: The one soul from which all souls come is the hypostasis, and not the World Soul,

which is derived from it in the same way as are the souls of other individuals. Plotinus is here concerned to stress the parallel between Soul and Intellect. Both are many while remaining a unity, though elsewhere Plotinus will point out that the unity is greater at the level of Intellect; hence the distinction he sometimes makes between Intellect as a one-many, and Soul as a many-and-one, cf. e.g. IV.8 [6] 4, 6–13. Further, souls have formal representations, *logoi* again, below them, just as they are formal representations of things in Intellect, but at a lower level. Here the *logoi* will be the formal elements of the lower phases of soul that inform the body and are necessary for the operation of its various functions.

Chapter 6

Why does the World Soul do different things from the individual souls, and they from each other?

6, 1–34 The problem to be considered in this chapter is why souls, which Plotinus maintains are all one, have the same capacities, and also the same formal principles from above, should end up as souls of different bodies, and

produce—or undergo—different effects. In particular, why is one of them the soul of the world, and the others not? It is perhaps worth pointing out that this problem would not have arisen but for Plotinus' concern that individual souls not be seen as deriving from the World Soul. As it is, however, his problem produces some interesting speculations, not least as to whether any particular soul might have ended up as the soul of the world. This is allied to the concept that there is a certain degree of serendipity as to which soul ends up with which role in the universe.

6, 3–4 *It has been explained*: Sc. in the three previous chapters.

6, 8–10 Plotinus had already used the comparison with knowledge remaining undivided while having parts to illustrate the position of individual souls in his earlier treatment of the same question in IV.9.5, 7ff. For the same parallel applied to Intellect and the intellects, cf. V.9 [5] 8, 3–7. The way that the parallel is used, however, is here somewhat different: now the point is that different people may possess the same degree of knowledge or technical expertise, while activating it to very different extents.

6, 12 *It is because the one has not departed from the All-Soul*: It is remarks like this that might be taken to support the idea that the World Soul and the hypostasis Soul are identical,

but the point is that unlike the individual souls, the World Soul does not need to descend to perform its task, because it controls a body that does not require its attention. The World Soul can conduct its business from above without the problem encountered by individual souls, and does so by using intellect (*nous*), which is what every soul has on its higher side, rather than reason (*logismos*), cf. IV.8.8, 11–16, and also the analogy with the Great Plant in ch. 4 above.

6, 12–13 *But has the body around itself while it is above*: More often Plotinus will say that body is in, or surrounded by, soul, a point on which he will insist when he later discusses how soul can be said to be in body, cf. ch. 22, 7–11.

6, 13–15 *Which already exists with their sister soul, as it were*: The expression "sister soul" should in itself suffice to show the relation between the World Soul and the individual souls. Had Plotinus pursued the analogy, he might have indicated the special position of the World Soul by saying that it was the most senior of the siblings. It is in this sense that one should understand the idea that the World Soul has in some way made preliminary provision for dwellings for the individual souls: for both notions, cf. also II.9 [33] 18, 14–17. This view of the World Soul's role in preparation for embodiment goes together with the first of Plotinus' two alternative ways of looking at the embodiment of the individual soul. In this, it comes to a body that comprises

matter plus an element of soul which it receives directly from the World Soul in so far as that body is part of what makes up the world; this element of soul is nature, or *physis* (on its relation to the rest of soul, cf. IV.4.18ff.), and it is only the sections of the individual soul above this that are added at each incarnation. In the second view, the whole of what may be seen as a vertical slice of soul that constitutes the individual soul is added at once, cf. VI.4.15, 8–18, and Blumenthal 1971, 27–30.

6, 15–17 *And it is possible for the one to look to the whole of Intellect*: The World Soul is further distinguished by the object of its contemplation. All entities in good order contemplate what is above them, cf. esp. III.8 [30] *passim*, and in the case of the World Soul that is taken to be Intellect as a whole. The other souls contemplate only their own particular intellects: on what these are, cf. on 5, 8–14 above. Why they do so is never satisfactorily explained. See further on 6, 17–21 below.

6, 17–20 *And perhaps even these would be capable of producing a world*: Plotinus still needs a reason why the individual souls, being theoretically equivalent to the World Soul, did not themselves produce the same effects, but the notion that the World Soul simply anticipated them, while superficially providing such a reason, itself requires further justification that Plotinus attempts to supply with the claim that

the World Soul is more closely tied to higher being. One might well ask why this should be so.

The unstated reason for this is probably that by inclining to what is above an entity becomes assimilated to it and therefore acquires its powers. Since the World Soul remains in the same state (cf. ll. 23–24), and is not distracted by its duties (cf. IV.8 [6] 8, 13–16; II.9 [33] 18, 14–17), that acquisition is permanent in its case. That higher entities have greater and more far-reaching powers, having effects further down on the scale of being than those of lower ones, became a formal principle by the time of Proclus, cf. esp. *Elements of Theology* 57, with Dodds' note *ad loc.* Dodds there cites an earlier example from Syrianus, *On Aristotle's Metaphysics*, 59, 17–18, but in that text the principle is stated for the One and Being, and not yet, or at least there, universalized.

6, 24–25 *So remaining in itself it acts when things approach it*: This follows from the premise that the World Soul remains attached to higher reality and is undisturbed by its administration of the world, cf. IV.8.2, 26–38. Similarly, the individual souls' departure and separation from what is above entails their descent.

6, 26–27 *Has dragged them down with it in their thinking*: Thinking (*tais gnômais*) here means discursive reason which, being in the center of the soul, can look up or down; if the

part of the soul below it is excessively involved with things pertaining to the sensible world, then reason too will move downward, cf. II.9.2, 4–15, where Plotinus uses the same words of one part of the soul being dragged down together with another that has been dragged down, *kathelkusthen synephelkusthai*, and goes on to contrast this situation with the World Soul's remaining and conducting the world's affairs without trouble, *apragmonôs . . . dioikousa*, because it is focused on what is above it.

The multifarious aspect of them: It seems better, with Harder (who compares 17, 9 below) and now Brisson *ad loc.*, to insert *to* before *poly*, which gives a better sense to the text.

6, 27–28 *The "seconds and thirds"*: Cf. *Timaeus* 41d, where, however, "second" and "third" are neuter adjectives, and not feminine as Plotinus has them (the correct forms appear in ch. 8, 12), understanding "souls," which would not be possible with the neuter forms. If the soul is seen as having three sections, intellect at the top, reason in the middle, and the rest below, the second and third types of soul will be ones which live at the level of reason and the lower faculties respectively. That would presumably be Plotinus' interpretation of Plato's second and third degree of purity of the soul mixture—the first is for World Soul. Plato seems to have envisaged different souls for men and women, cf. *Timaeus* 41e–42a.

6, 30–34 *Just as with us not all souls*: The three levels of unification and activity correspond to the three sections of soul: our level depends on which section's activity predominates. The unification referred to is with Intellect. Dividing human activities and their practitioners into three is a philosophical tradition (cf. also 8, 10–15 below) which can be traced back to the story preserved by Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* V 3, 8, about Pythagoras' distinguishing of three groups at the Games, spectators (the best), competitors, and traders, perhaps the foundation for Plato's scheme of tripartite soul and society, if it is not post-Platonic. On this question cf. Guthrie [1967–1978], I. 164–166; Gottschalk [1980], 29–31.

Chapter 7

In this chapter, Plotinus addresses the second, fifth and third respectively of the arguments set out in Chapter 1. His answers to the objection resolve themselves into a series of alternative exegeses of well-known Platonic passages that have plainly been used by protagonists of the theory that our souls are a part of the All-Soul to buttress their position.

7, 1–12 Plotinus here argues against the proposition that *Philebus* 30a–c provides support for the idea that our souls are parts of the World Soul. Who the "someone" was who understood the text in this way is not clear, but we might think of some Stoicizing Middle Platonist such as Severus, if not even his own companion Amelius. Plotinus uses a method that he frequently uses elsewhere and which was to become standard among later Platonists: any apparent disagreement with Plato is to be removed by showing that Plato's real meaning is not to be found in a straightforward interpretation of the text at issue. The method also allows any inconvenient text to be attributed to the exigencies of its context. He thus explains the reference to our souls being part of the World Soul as an *ad hominem* argument against those who maintain that the heavens do not have a soul. Plato's real doctrine is to be found in the *Timaeus* passage, 41d, already referred to at 6, 27, where the individual souls are made from the same mixture as the World Soul, but a mixture of poorer quality (second and third "pressings," as it were), by means of which he assigns difference to them. How the same mixture can be different is a question for interpreters of Plato: the question does not seem to have worried Plotinus. Proclus saw the problem and, after asserting that Timaeus used this part of the story to show that partial and complete souls were of the same kind, goes to some trouble to explain how the

partial souls' mixture was the same and yet not the same (*Commentary on the Timaeus* III 257, 30–260, 4 Diehl).

7, 10–12 *From the same mixing-bowl*: I.e. the World Soul is of the same kind as the individual souls; the following words explain why, according to Plotinus' understanding of the *Timaeus*, they are not identical with it.

7, 12–20 *But what about the passage in the* Phaedrus*?*: Against those who claim that the statement in *Phaedrus* 246b, that all soul cares for everything that has no soul, means that there is only one soul (ch. 1, 34–37), Plotinus adduces the distinction that Plato makes later in the same passage between a soul that remains above and another that "sheds its wings" (246c): by this, Plotinus says, Plato produces another soul. For the shedding of wings as a characterization of the individual soul's descent, cf. IV.8 [6] 1, 37 and 4, 22; VI.9 [9] 9, 24; as one that differentiates it from the World Soul, II.9 [33] 4, 1. Though this seems to have escaped the notice of commentators on the *Phaedrus*, the idea of the soul falling because it loses its wings is likely to have been drawn from the myth of Icarus. Plotinus does not here enlarge on how this other soul is related to the one that does not descend, and perhaps it is sufficient for his present purpose to show that the *Phaedrus* provides evidence for the existence of more than one kind of soul.

7, 20–31 This final section of the chapter is directed against the view that our following the rotation of the heavens (as Plato enjoins, *Timaeus* 90c–d) means that our souls are parts of the World Soul.

7, 20–25 *As for our following the rotation of the universe*: The fact that we are acted on by the World Soul does not entail our souls being parts of its soul. An argument for this is our susceptibility to local influences: the references to water and air may recall Hippocrates' treatise *On Airs, Waters, Places.* For the constitution of our bodies affecting our behavior, something that the strict doctrine of the immaterial soul's impassibility should not admit, but which Plotinus will allow when he is trying to explain individuality, at least among those who do not pay attention to their lower selves, cf. III.1 [3] 8, 15–17; I.8 [51] 8, 30–31, and for further discussion, Blumenthal 1971, 56–58.

7, 25–9 *And we have granted that*: Plotinus here uses the model of the lowest part of our soul, that which makes matter into body, belonging to the World Soul in so far as our bodies are part of the world, while the individual begins above this level. This is what enables him to talk of us opposing another soul to what we have from the World Soul, thereby producing a second argument for the individual soul's not being a part of the World Soul. On this as one of two ways of looking at how much of the

individual soul is "added" to the body, cf. note on 6, 13–15 above. There is no need to introduce astrology here, as does Theiler, *ad loc.*

7, 29–31 *In respect of wombs too*: Being in the womb is suggested as a parallel to being in the world. Our soul is not a part of our mother's soul, and we are to infer that our souls are similarly independent of the world in which we are, and of its soul.

Chapter 8

Now that Plotinus has offered refutations of the arguments for our souls being parts of the World Soul, he considers some problems arising from his view of their essential identity.

8, 1–3 *The fact of sympathy does not stand in the way of the argument*: A further possible objection is that the sympathetic relation between souls might mean that they are parts of one whole: Plotinus claims that a common origin is sufficient to explain it. "Sympathy" is the originally Old Stoic concept—perhaps developed further by Posidonius—that all the parts of a continuum are capable of participating in the same affection, and that the cosmos is such a unit,

cf. e.g. *SVF* II 534, 1013. Plotinus has taken over this originally completely materialist notion and modified it to allow it to apply to the body-soul compound, but still within the same cosmos. For further development of this concept, see IV.5 *passim*.

8, 3–17 The first topic to be recapitulated is that of the respects in which souls are one and many. When Plotinus has rejected the thesis of the radical unity of all soul, or of individual souls being *parts* of an All-Soul, it is incumbent on him to define carefully the relations between them. This he has done in chs. 2–7, but he wishes to summarize his results again now.

8, 6–9 *Differences between souls*: More will be said about these matters in IV.4, but the question of behavior has already been mentioned in ch. 7, 20–25, on which see above. In this context, the activities of reason are presumably those of what Aristotle would have called the practical reason. That the condition of our souls may depend on previous lives makes it clear—it has sometimes been denied—that Plotinus believed in pre-existence as well as reincarnation, cf. the earlier III.4 [15] 2, 11–12, and the extensive discussion of what happens after death in chs. 24ff. of this treatise.

8, 9–10 *For he says that the souls' choice*:.That is to say, in the Myth of Er, cf. *Republic* X 620a–d.

8, 11–12 *The differences in these have been spoken of*: Cf. *Timaeus* 41d, and ch. 6, 27–34 above, with note there. It is worth noting that Plotinus now cites Plato correctly, with the neuter adjectives.

8, 13 *Each soul is what it is by virtue of what is active in it*: Souls are determined by the part of them that is active, on the Aristotelian principle that cognition involves assimilation to its objects, cf. ll. 15–16. For the same idea, cf. VI.7 [38] 6, 17–18, *estin hekastos kath' hon energei*, "each is the man in accordance with whom he is active."

8, 13–14 *By one being actually in a state of unification*: While at first sight "becoming unified" (*henousthai*) might be seen as a reference to union with the One, the context here would seem to indicate that Plotinus is talking rather about the three levels of activity in the "normal" soul (true union with the One being a highly unusual achievement, only attained by Plotinus himself, according to Porphyry, four times during Porphyry's time with him, cf. *Life of Plotinus*, 23): intellection, knowledge, and activities to do directly with the sensible world, brought together under the heading of *orexis*, "desire" or appetition: "becoming unified" in this context would therefore denote the activity of intellect

proper, intuitive thought (*noesis*), while *gnosis* would have to refer to that of soul, viz., discursive reasoning. On this division of human activity, see further the remarkable passage *Enn.* VI.7 [38] 6, 11–21, where we find a similar three-way distinction of levels of human consciousness.

8, 17–35 Here Plotinus broaches the question of the total number of souls, in view of the imperative that the number of true beings remain constant.

8, 17–22 *For every one rational principle is multiple and variegated*: One "rational principle" or "plan" must be what *logos* means here, since there is no question of representation at a lower level. This plan would be the pattern of relations between World Soul and all the individual souls. The "ensouled living being with many forms" will be based on the *Timaeus*' description of the intelligible living being, 30b–d. While that is a *zôon empsykhon*, an "animal with a soul," the addition of *ennoun*, "equipped with intellect," will have been a clear signal to Neoplatonists that Plato meant the hypostasis Intellect, containing as it does the Forms and, indeed, *being* them. The *zôon empsykhon* here would be the same sort of thing, but at the more diffuse and multifarious level of Soul, containing souls and intellects, if the latter exist at this level; see note on 5, 5–18. If there is such a pattern, Plotinus argues, then there will be order among souls and, consequentially, even in the

world of bodies: in particular, there must be a definite number of souls.

8, 22–24 *For again, true beings must be stable*: An alternative translation of *hestanai* (here translated "be stable") would be that the theoretically possible increase in the number of entities must "come to a halt." Plotinus is no more prepared to accept actual infinity than was Aristotle (cf. e.g. V.7.1, 2–7 and 3, 20–23; VI.6.17, 1–18 and 18, 1–12), but in the light of what follows, and the further use of the same verb at l. 36, the sense of stability is probably the right one here. *Ta onta*, "(real) beings," are the contents of Intellect seen as Being, and Plotinus reminds us that they are also objects of intellect (*noêta*); he does not here mention that they are at the same time themselves intellects. For the identification in an earlier treatise, cf. V.I [10] 1, 20–30. The fact that they are all identical *qua* subject and object of intellection does not prevent their being distinct individuals (literally "thises," *tode*), cf. e.g. V.9.6, 1–9.

8, 24–30 *For some things*: The first group, consisting of bodies, is in flux for the straightforwardly Platonic reason that the forms in them are merely representations of the real ones, superimposed, as it were, on matter.

8, 31–32 *And even if that were the case*: If there were matter there, it would have to be intelligible matter, based

on the Indefinite Dyad attributed to Plato and the early Platonists by Aristotle (cf. e.g. *Metaphysics* M 7, 1081a12–17; N 1, 1088b28–30), and discussed in II.4 [12] 1–5; cf. Rist 1962b. The addition of substance, that is Being, will then refer to the information of the unformed "matter" of Intellect when it reverts to the One, this reversion being the origin of Intellect and Being, cf. V.2 [11] 1, 7–13, and Lloyd 1987, 162–163.

8, 35 *A thing of this sort*: That is, eternal.

8, 35–47 In what sense is the soul infinite, or rather *apeiros*—since we must consider that this polyvalent word may carry one of its other meanings, "without limits or boundaries, either external or internal"? Actual numerical infinity is unacceptable to Plotinus (see on 8, 22–24 above); hence his answer that the infinity consists in *dynamis*, another term of more than one meaning, which here carries two of them, "power" and "potentiality." The second is excluded in the rejection of infinite divisibility. That souls are *apeiroi* in the sense of having external limits is denied at 8, 38–42. Thus both individual souls and the World Soul can extend wherever there is a capacity to receive them. For intelligible entities being infinite either in power or potentiality, cf. Blumenthal 1971, 116–119.

8, 38 *For God too is not limited*: On *theos*, "a god" or "something divine," as applicable to Intellect, cf. on ch. 1, 15 above.

8, 47–60 This passage concerns the problem of spontaneous generation. Plotinus, like Aristotle (cf. *Generation of Animals* III 11, 762a35–763b26; *Metaphysics* Z 9, 1034b4–7), believed that this was possible, but argues that it does not involve the production of additional souls, since anything that might come into being in this way will partake of the one soul that already extends everywhere—that is to say, the lower aspect of soul ("nature," *physis*) emanating from the World Soul. That is to state a consequence of this view of soul rather than a proof of it: if it were so intended, the argument would be circular.

8, 48 *If many things come from it*: Some translators assume that "animals" (the word *zôa* is actually present in two groups of mss.) is to be understood with "many" (so Cilento, Armstrong, but not Radice-Faggin: "living beings"; or Harder, Igal: "parts"), presumably on the grounds that that is what things with soul will be; but we must not exclude the possibility that Plotinus had in mind additionally—or even instead—the production of plant material which for him would also have soul: fungi are, after all, the most obvious product of putrescence. For the same reason, we

translate *zôôn* in l. 51 as "living things," though it could mean animals exclusively.

8, 50–54 *But the things that result from its perishing*: It is basic to Plotinus' view of the embodied soul—and "body" includes the world—that it is not only fundamentally the same but also omnipresent, and that is the underlying assumption of this whole discussion. That the several constituents of the sensible world have various capacities for receiving soul, all of which is present, is explicitly stated at VI.4 [22] 3, 10–11: "all is offered, but the recipient is able to take only so much." The omnipresence applies both macro- and micro-cosmically; hence the example of parts of us being cut off.

Second Problem: How Soul comes to be in Body: Differences between World Soul and Other Souls (chs. 9–18)

This section comprises the second question that Plotinus wishes to raise, viz. the mode of ensoulment both of the world as a whole and of individual bodies. It involves a major statement of his vision of the physical world and of the place of the soul in it.

Chapter 9

Plotinus here considers two senses in which the soul may be said to enter a body: passing from an aerial or fiery body to one of earth (this seems to envisage a role for the pneumatic vehicle, which is a concept that he does not wish to entertain for the soul once it is in an earthly body, but seems to find a use for in respect of bodies between incarnations; see Dillon [2013]); and the initial entry from a totally bodiless state into body, which is what he proposes to deal with specifically. He dwells in particular in this chapter on the World Soul entering its body, employing the notable images of the house not cut off from its builder, and of the net in the water.

9, 1–2 In the first line we find the general question forecast in ch. 1, 1–16, "how (*pôs* in a more general sense) is the soul in body?" This is followed by two more specific questions, in what way (*pôs* in a more specific sense) it is in the body, and how it comes to be there. The first of these questions is answered in chs. 19–23, the second in chs. 9–18—the present section.

9, 3–12 The second question is here divided into two headings, soul changing bodies, and soul coming into body for the "first time" (this latter a purely theoretical case, in the context of an eternal universe, but requiring

discussion nonetheless). Plotinus' term for "changing bodies," *metensômatôsis*, is not attested before his time, but since it is also used by his slightly older contemporary Bishop Hippolytus of Rome (*Refutation of All Heresies* 1. 3 .2), it is presumably not his own coinage. In respect of the second half of the first alternative, the transition from an airy or fiery body to an earthy one should not be taken to refer to the soul-vehicles of later Platonism, of which some have found traces in Plotinus (so Dodds, *Proclus. Elements of Theology*, p. 318; and see further, note on 15, 1–13 below): those are not exchanged for others on incarnation, but remain with the soul both during embodiment and at least for a time thereafter. More likely is Theiler's suggestion that the airy or fiery bodies are those of *daimones*, the semi-divine beings that in Greek thought populate the hierarchical space between gods and humans: on their place, cf. e.g. VI.7 [38] 6, 26–31.

9, 7–8 *Because the starting-point of the entrance is not clear*: Plotinus here employs what appears to be a quasi-technical term, *eiskrisis*, for the entrance of the soul into the embryo, used by him on only one other occasion (VI.4.16, 4), but used repeatedly by Porphyry in his treatise *To Gauros: On the Ensoulment of the Embryo*, 33, 1, etc. Before Plotinus, the term is also found in this technical sense in Numenius, Fr. 36 Des Places.

9, 12–51 For the rest of the chapter, Plotinus focuses on how the World Soul relates to its body. In this connection, he produces the striking images, first of the finely-constructed house not separated from its creator (29–34), and then of the net in the water (38–45).

9, 15 *As a theoretical postulate*: The expression *didaskalias kharin*, "for the purpose of instruction," or "exposition," became the standard way of expressing the view that the "creation" story in the *Timaeus* was not to be understood literally, as betokening a temporal creation: the phrase is attributed to Speusippus and Xenocrates in a scholion on Aristotle *On The Heavens* 279b32ff. (Xenocrates, Fr. 54 Heinze/156 Isnardi Parente). Though there were dissenters (notably Plutarch and Atticus), this was to be the standard Platonist interpretation from Speusippus on, cf. Proclus, *Commentary on the Timaeus* 1. 276, 30ff. (Proclus, however, starts the story with Crantor). The world's body is equipped with soul at *Timaeus* 36d–e.

9, 20–23 *The truth is like this*: Again the problem that there must be body if soul is to depart from its existence above and associate itself with a body, but that body requires the addition of an element of soul to matter. Hence the philosophically awkward idea that soul will produce a body to which it can then go. For this double action of the soul, cf. also III.4 [15] 1, 14–15: "When it (sc. matter) is perfected,

it becomes a body, receiving the form appropriate to its potentiality, a receiver for the principle which produced it and brought it to maturity" (sc. the soul). See further ch. 6 above, and note on 6, 13–15.

9, 23–27 *One might compare the situation to an intense light*: Just as soul is often spoken of as throwing light on or irradiating what is below, so matter is, if less often, equated with darkness, cf. e.g. II.4 [12] 10, 13ff.; I.8 [51] 4, 28–32. That is the point of the comparison here. The darkness is first lit by the furthest rays of the fire, representing the lowest phase of soul, and then illumined by the soul itself; cf. also 10, 7–9. For soul illuminating matter as a paradigm of its bestowal of form, cf. VI.7.7, 8–16.

9, 28 *As the saying goes, "dimly in the dimness"*: The "dimness" is matter. For the expression *amudron en amudrôi* "dimly in the dimness," cf. II.4.10, 30: *amudrôs amudron, kai skoteinôs skoteinon*, "a dim thing dimly, and a dark thing darkly." There is, however, no recorded instance in Greek literature of precisely this phrase.

9, 29–31 *This entity indeed has come into being*: The comparison of the physical world to "a fine elaborate house" not separate from its creator, but yet not being connected with him in any "contaminating" way, is a remarkable one. On this relationship between creator and creation, cf, II.9 [33]

7, 9–15 (especially 13–15): "the soul of the universe cannot be in bond to what it itself has bound: it is sovereign and therefore immune to lower things, over which we on the contrary are not masters"; and II.1 [40] 4, 32–33.

9, 32–33 *In so far as it is possible for it to participate in being*: On the idea of participation according to capacity, cf. note on 3, 12 above.

9, 33–34 *For he looks after it while remaining above.* The pronouns and participles here are masculine, not feminine, as they should be if they referred to soul. Plotinus may have reverted to the builder, but the idea that the overseer is in charge while remaining above is hardly appropriate, and so the reference is probably to Intellect, which is sometimes said to exercise the demiurgic function through soul; cf. II.3 [52] 18, 13–16.

9, 34–36 *It is ensouled in this kind of way*: For body being in soul rather than vice versa, cf. ch. 1, 35–36, and note *ad loc.*

9, 38–47 In this simile, which is the net and which the sea? On balance it seems that the net is the soul, and the sea is alive because it is in it, as body is in the soul that gives it life. The soul can extend as far as required for the accommodation of body precisely because it is in itself non-extended. As Plotinus remarks, if there were no body,

"the soul would have no concern for extension." The net image recurs, with a rather more negative connotation, at VI.6 [34] 3, 34, where Plotinus cautions against trying to cast a net of limit over the Unlimited, as it will simply slip through it. The relation of a net with the sea into which it is cast plainly captured his imagination.

9, 48–51 *And the soul's shadow extends as far as the reason-principle which derives from it*: The reason-principle, *logos*, is here the formal element made available by soul to the sensible world which it controls. The shadow is simply another Platonist way of referring to representations at a lower level of something that exists in a more real way at a higher one (the ultimate source will be the Divided Line passage in the *Republic*, 509e–510a, where shadows are a species of images), but also relates to the comparison of soul as a light or fire illuminating darkness, cf. ll. 24–26 above, and 10, 5–9.

Chapter 10

The function of the World Soul, continued. How soul acts as a mean between the eternal and the temporal, and how it forms the beings subsequent to it.

10, 1–27 We are now presented with a conspectus of the role of soul in the formation of the physical universe and its relation with what is above it. A series of vivid images are conjured up to evoke the activity of the soul in projecting the reason-principles (*logoi*) inherent in it, and which it has derived from the intelligible realm above it, onto the darkness of matter, to bring into being an ordered world.

10, 2–3 *As for instance air*, *light*, *the sun*: In both the analogies offered, the sun, in the intelligible realm, would seem to represent the intellect, the light the reason-principles (*logoi*) that it bestows upon the soul, and the air or the moon, which receive the sun's light, the soul, which is thereby illuminated or informed by the intellect. As is often the case, Plotinus' images are flexible: elsewhere, sun, light, and moon represent the One, Intellect, and Soul, cf. V.6 [24] 4, 14–20.

10, 5 *Then the first things*: It seems possible here to retain the mss. reading *eita prôta* (though with the necessary insertion of *ta* before *prôta*). The emendations of Theiler, *é ta prôta*, and Igal, *héi ta prôta*, seem to miss the point. The "first things" would then be, presumably, the heavenly bodies, which fill the role of light in relation to "the ones that come next," which are the sublunar entities, compared here to "the ultimate stages of a fire" (*pyros eskhata*), beyond

which is the darkness of matter. This is all a fine example of Plotinus' creative use of light imagery.

10, 7–9 *Like the ultimate stages of a fire*: Here again we have the idea that matter—the darkness in the path of the fire—is dimly lit, or receives a vestige of soul, making matter into body, and then by a kind of second illumination that body receives form; cf. 9, 23–27, and note there.

10, 14–15 *The soul does not produce on the basis of a plan*: The soul needs no deliberation or enquiry, because if its highest part is in contact with intellect, and therefore assimilated to it, as it must be if it is to create (cf. III.8.5), and as the World Soul always is, then it is above the level of discursive thinking which is characteristic of soul as such. For another good statement of the inherent quality of the soul's deliberation, cf. III.2 [47] 2, 14ff.

10, 17–19 *Art is posterior to soul and imitates it*: For the products of art or craft as inferior to those of nature—and for Plotinus, as for Plato, imitation implies inferiority (cf. e.g. II.9.12, 18, and Plato, *Statesman* 288c; *Laws* X 889a–e; and for the product as mere toys, *ibid.* c–d), though in the latter passage the proponents of the superiority of nature are actually atheists, and advocates of the "might is right" school! However, the argument holds good for a purposive nature as well. Plato does not here actually use the word

"imitation"; for that terminology, we may turn to Aristotle, *Physics* II 2, 194a21–2: "if . . . art imitates nature . . ."

10, 22–24 *At a lower level*: In spite of what he has just said, Plotinus is now able to think of things in the sensible world impeding each other in their search for form, because he is again working with the model of bodies seeking to take on as much soul as they are capable of receiving. This does not apply when in the following lines he returns to the World Soul working as a whole on the whole world.

10, 27–42 Plotinus in this section focuses on the peculiar feature of soul's creativity, in that it exhibits twin powers, an internal and an external. In the case of inanimate forces like fire, the internal force is dormant (*heudei*, 33), but in the soul it is "wakeful" (*egrêgoros*, 36). This is the higher, undescended aspect of the World Soul (as of the individual soul), which is purely intellectual, but it is the source of the *logoi* that it imparts to every aspect of the physical world.

10, 27–29 *On the one hand images of gods, on the other habitations of men*: "Images" (*agalmata*) of gods may be thought of as the homes of gods, just as the bodies of human beings are theirs, by extension of the normal belief that a god lived in his temple. For the image as the god's dwelling—and not the god himself—cf. already Heraclitus, Fr. 22B5 DK. Here, however, the images are probably the bodies of the

stars and planets, classified as gods at *Timaeus* 39e. For the whole world as an *agalma* of the intelligible gods, cf. II.9 [33] 8, 10–16 (perhaps mis-quoting, or mis-applying, *Timaeus* 37c).

10, 31–32 *Soul has a part which resides in itself*: The double activity of soul, turning to itself on the one hand and to what is below and requires its attention on the other, is characteristic not only of World Soul, but also Intellect above and the individual souls below. In the case of Intellect and the World Soul, however, the outward and lower activity does not involve the risk of corruption. For a discussion of this notion, see Smith, 1974, 7–13.

10, 38–40 *It gives a reason-principle to the body*: The *logos* or formal principle which soul bestows on body is an *eidôlon* or image of the one in the soul itself, because it exists at a lower level. Plotinus frequently uses *eidôlon* and words of similar meaning, particularly *eikôn*, and less frequently *indalma*, to indicate that anything at a given level is a necessarily defective copy of the thing at the immediately superior level from which it is derived. Thus the soul in animal bodies is an image, *eidôlon*, present by virtue of irradiation (*ellampsis*) from the All-Soul (I.1 [53] 11, 12–13), and the lower soul in human beings may be spoken of as image of the higher, or an irradiation from it, cf. V.9 [5] 6, 15–19; VI.4 [22] 3, 19–22, and later in the present treatise, IV.4.8ff.

10, 41–42 *It is because of this that the world has everything that it has*: The cosmos has everything because, unlike individuals, which may only be able to receive one level or other of the souls available to them, it receives the whole of the World Soul, which contains as *logoi* everything that is in Intellect.

Chapter 11

Further discussion of the mode of production of the World Soul.

11, 1–27 We find here something of a meditation on the mediating role of Soul in the universe, stressing both the dependence of all creation on the *logoi* descending from Intellect (the "god" being spoken of here), and at the same time the transcendence of Intellect with respect to all its productions. This rounds off Plotinus' discussion of the mode of production of Soul as hypostasis and the World Soul.

11, 1–6 *It seems to me that the sages of old*: Armstrong sees here a reference to "the ancient Egyptian practice of ritually animating statues," and so something that later became a feature of theurgy. It is not necessary to suppose, however,

that Plotinus means more than that, in Greek tradition, gods were thought to be present in their statues and the temples that housed them.

11, 5–7 *And that is receptive which is in any way imitative of it*: On imitation, cf. above on 10, 17–19, though here the concept of imitation is employed in a more positive sense: the god's statue is a *good*, effective imitation.

11, 7 *Like a mirror able to grasp some image of it*: The mirror is a favorite metaphor for the receptive capacity of a lower being, corresponding to the notion that higher beings produce images or reflections of themselves in what is below, cf. I.I. 8, 15–18, where the soul is presented as giving life to bodies, not by merging with them, but rather "by giving forth, without any change in itself, images or likenesses of itself, like one face caught by many mirrors" (trans. MacKenna).

11, 8 *Indeed the nature of the universe*: The nature of the universe, *hé tou pantos physis*, probably does not here mean simply the nature of the world, as it does in l. 3 above, but specifically the lower part of the World Soul, which is immanent in the world. While *physis* is often used to refer to the lower phases of soul, and not only that which makes matter into body, it is normally clearer from the context than here that that is what Plotinus means. On the

precise sense of *physis*, see further IV.4.18–21 below, and the notes there; and III.8 [30] 2–4, an excellent exposition of Plotinus' concept of Nature.

11, 11–12 *Joined it to that god*: The "god" is Intellect, to which the World Soul looks for the formal principles which it mediates to the world below.

11, 13–14 *The sun there was Intellect*: The "sun there," strictly speaking, is the Form of the sun: that is why it is Intellect, because all Forms are intellects, and thereby also Intellect itself. However, it is not quite clear here whether Plotinus is being influenced by the Sun Simile of *Republic* VI, where the sun is the image of the Good in the intelligible realm.

11, 21–23 *Nothing, after all, is a long way off*: The concept of the intelligible world, or the divine, being both distant and near finds a good expression in VI.9 [9] 8, 31–45. In view of that, it seems possible to retain the phrase *ou topois*, "though not spatially," which is excised as a gloss by HS and Armstrong (cf. *oude . . . topôi* at VI.9.8, 31–32). It would make the point that the distance or difference between intelligible entities and either other intelligible entities or sensible ones does not consist in actual physical separation.

11, 23–27 *The (celestial) beings in this realm*: The "divine" status of the heavenly bodies (cf. ch. 10, 27–29) depends

on, and is maintained by, their constant contact with their formal origins in Intellect. Their souls, we may recall, are closer to the World Soul, with its unhindered contemplation of what is above (most immediately, the hypostasis Soul, "from which it has, *as it were* (*hoion*), departed"), than to ours, by virtue of the fact that they have incorruptible bodies superior to those in the sublunary world. That is also why Plotinus, still referring to these "gods," refers to the soul that has departed, or descended, from the Intellect, as looking only upward to Intellect.

Chapter 12

The focus now shifts to individual human souls. The descent of souls is not total, but cyclical, and this process is governed by the World Soul.

12, 1–12 The descent into embodiment of souls is portrayed as a misfortune, the full effects of which are mitigated by the providential care exercised by the World Soul in its demiurgic role, here allegorized as Zeus. Their fall is made more malignant by the fact that the souls tend to identify with their "lower" parts rather than their "higher."

12, 1–2 *As though in the mirror of Dionysus*: Plotinus here makes an allusion to the Orphic myth (*Orphicorum Fragmenta*, Fr. 209 Kern) of the seduction of the child Dionysus by the Titans with a mirror provided by a jealous Hera, which leads to his dismemberment and devouring by the Titans, only his heart being saved by Athena. However, Plotinus is not intending us to dwell on the other details of the myth, but simply on the motif of being attracted downward by a spurious vision of oneself; and he emphasizes at the same time the fact that the soul is not drawn down in respect of *all* of itself—a part remains above—a reference to one of Plotinus' more distinctive doctrines, for which cf. e.g. the early treatise IV.8 [6] 8.

12, 3 *But even so these are not cut off*: He elsewhere frequently reminds us that the lower reaches of the soul never lose their connection with the higher ones, cf. esp. V.2 [11] 2, 26–29: "So it is like a long life that has been stretched out into a length, all of it continuous with itself, but other again by virtue of difference, without the first part being lost in the second."

12, 5 *Their heads . . . firmly fixed above the heavens*: The reference here is to the undescended intellect. While the words are taken from the Homeric description of Strife, with her feet on the earth and her head in the skies (*Iliad* 4. 440–443), Plotinus has adjusted the image by putting the

heads higher than the heavens, that is, above the sphere of Soul and into that of Intellect. It is likely that Plotinus is thereby alluding to the place above the heavens which is the location of the Forms, and so for him of the Intellect, at 247c of the *Phaedrus* myth, a text already cited in the treatise, cf. 7, 12–20.

12, 6–7 *Because their middle part was constrained*: The middle part of the soul is, as we have already seen, its reasoning part (*dianoia*), capable of looking both upward and downward. Here, where Plotinus is concentrating on the effects of embodiment, it is represented as being forced to look downward. That entails an at least temporary deterioration of the soul that does so.

12, 8 *Father Zeus took pity on them*: The description of Zeus as "taking pity" (*eleêsas*) is a reminiscence of Plato, *Symposium* 191b, where, in the speech of Aristophanes, Zeus feels sorry for the double creatures whose arrogance he has suppressed by cutting them in half. In the *Symposium* passage, however, Zeus does not free the bisected creatures, but rearranges their genitalia (bringing them around to the front), so the analogy should not be pressed, but will again suggest that the embodied souls are in a less good condition than they had been. Here Zeus will also, as elsewhere in Plotinus, stand for the World Soul, in its capacity of controlling what happens in the world below it, cf. V.1 [10] 7, 33–37, and IV.4.10, 1–4 below, where Plotinus spells

out that Zeus sometimes refers to Intellect and sometimes to the Soul which rules the world; cf. also III.5 [50] 8 *passim*, where Aphrodite is identified as the World Soul, and Zeus as Intellect.

12, 12–19 *For what it has is already the whole world*: For the world having cycles in which souls may be reincarnated, cf. V.7 [18] *passim*, where the system is presented as a way of avoiding infinity in the intelligible world while allowing for an at least potentially infinite number of instantiations of its contents in the sensible. It should be noted that Plotinus is, here and elsewhere, talking about cyclical recurrence in a single cosmos, and not a succession of worlds, as in Stoicism and some of the Presocratics.

12, 19–26 *Evidence of this is the harmony of the souls*: The concord (*symphônia*) and connection of things in this world with the heavens, that is, with things governed by their sister World Soul, will be used in a later treatise to explain why astrology apparently works, cf. II.3 [52], but see already III.1 [3] 5–6. The idea that the cosmos is ordered according to musical ratios is originally Pythagorean, and may even go back to Pythagoras himself, cf. Kirk-Raven-Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, pp. 233–234. That the heavens actually emit musical sounds is attributed to clever and ingenious men by Aristotle at *On the Heavens* 290b12–29, a text printed under "anonymous Pythagoreans" by Diels-Kranz 58B35: it is perhaps a reference to Philolaus and his

contemporaries. Plotinus' source is more likely to have been *Republic* X 617b. 12, 25–26 shows that Plotinus himself is not inclined to take this idea literally.

12, 29 *And passing through lives in their several kinds*: The words for passing through, *diexodos* and *diexodeuô*, are perhaps used to recall that this is also the characteristic way in which soul thinks, cf. e.g. III.7 [45] 13, 41–44, where the movement of the soul is described as occurring "in everlasting progression" (*en diexodôi aidiôi*).

12, 30–31 *Intellect as a whole, for its part, is always above*: All intellect is "above": this includes the individual human intellect, which Plotinus maintains, admittedly against the general run of Platonist opinion, did not descend with the rest of the soul; cf. e.g. IV.8.8.

12, 32–34 *Soul, since it is nearer to it*: Soul staying in contact with what is above and transmitting it to what is below: this particular aspect of soul occupying a central position in Plotinus' system relates to Intellect performing its demiurgic activity through soul. Plotinus will, at different times, identify both Intellect and, if less often, Soul with the Demiurge of the *Timaeus;* cf. V.1 [10] 8, 1–5; III.5 [50] 8 (Intellect); IV.4.9, 1–9 (Soul).

12, 38–39 *For the soul goes to whatever destination it has become like*: Perhaps another reminiscence of the Myth of Er, *Republic* X 619b–620d, on the souls' choices being influenced, if not determined, by their former lives; cf. III.4 [15] 2, 12–30 and VI.7 [38] 7. Plotinus, unlike his pupil Porphyry, and all subsequent Platonists, does seem to have taken seriously the concept of reincarnation into animal bodies as a consequence of various types of bad behavior at the human level.

Chapter 13

Further points about the descent of the individual soul; its following of law-like processes.

13, 1–32 Throughout this chapter, the descent of soul is treated as inevitable, cf. the "automatically" in line 8, and note *ad loc*., and the references to Fate later in the chapter. It is not clear what Plotinus means by Justice (*Dikê*) here, but the original sense of the word, indicating everyone's rights and territory as demarcated by those of others, would fit the context. Things below Intellect have an inferior version of the true choice that exists there. Lurking behind this section is the imagery of the Choice of Lives in the Myth of Er, in *Republic* X 617d ff., of which this is intended as a "scientific," as opposed to a mythical, version. In fact,

Nature (*physis*), as the lower aspect of the World Soul, takes charge of the whole process, and directs the souls to the slots that they must fill.

13, 1 *The ineluctable prescription*: The adjective *anapodrastos* occurs again below, at 24, 10, in a similar context. Plotinus may have derived the term from such a text as Pseudo-Aristotle, *On the Universe* 401b13, where it is etymologized as deriving from Adrasteia, who figures in *Phaedrus* 248c, where she utters a decree similar to that promulgated in *Republic* X; or possibly from Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On Fate*, p. 166.3.

13, 3 *An image of the model corresponding to its original choice and disposition*: Presumably a reference to the original choice of life as depicted in the Myth of Er (*Republic* 619b–620d).

13, 8 *it goes down automatically*: The Greek word, *automatôs*, indicates something that happens without thought or purpose.

13, 9 *Like the summons of a herald*: An evocation here, presumably, of the "spokesman" (*prophêtês*) of *Republic* X 617d2, who announces the decrees of Fate to the soul, directs the choice of lives, and ultimately ushers the souls on their way to rebirth.

13, 11 *As if by the powers of magicians*: Plotinus did not in fact attribute much importance to magic, and in any case did not think that it affected the soul until it was associated with a body, and then only its lower part, cf. IV.4.43–44, and Armstrong [1955] 73–79; see also Brisson [1992]. So the comparison here will have a purely illustrative value.

13, 13–14 *Like the growing of beards*: A comparison of macrocosm with miscrocosm; cf. IV.4.11, 17–21 below, where the same point is made.

13, 16–17 *And so too in the case of the management of trees*: For the comparison with the management of trees, cf. III.1 [3] 4, 4–8, and III.4 [15] 1, 1–9.

13, 17 *The souls go neither voluntarily nor because they have been sent*: Souls would not choose to descend since their aspirations are directed upward, but Plotinus wishes to avoid the alternative that they are compelled to descend. Arguably, his various illustrations fail to allow him to escape from this dilemma, since, if souls are subject to either destiny or natural necessity, they are thereby subject to some sort of compulsion. Contrast IV.8 [6] 1, 46–48, where both our soul and the World Soul are sent "by the god." On the general question of the type of "necessity" involved in the descent of the soul, see O'Brien [1977].

13, 20 *Toward the accomplishment of some noble exploits*: Plotinus here interestingly evokes the concept of spontaneous acts of courage, perhaps, or generosity, not accompanied by calculation.

13, 25–27 *The law does not derive its power of fulfilment from outside*: The law here will represent the paradigm in Intellect that is present in the world below in the form of a *logos*, a representation appropriate to the lower level at which it appears.

13, 30 *As though weighing down upon them*: For another similar use of "weigh down" (*brithein*), cf. III.4.3, 16 (being weighed down by wickedness).

13, 32 *Where the law in them tells them, as it were, to go*: The inclusion of "as it were" (*hoion*) is important, as Plotinus does not wish in fact to suggest that any ordering from the law takes place. The descent of the souls may not be voluntary, but it is not externally constrained either.

Chapter 14

An allegory of the soul's descent: the souls as the adornments of Pandora, representing the physical cosmos.

14, 1–19 We have here one of Plotinus' more remarkable efforts at allegory, in this case of the creation and adornment of Pandora, as recounted in Hesiod's *Works and Days*, 60–89. The details of what represents what in this chapter are not always clear, but its last sentence shows that Plotinus is not in any case concerned with a precise interpretation; he merely wants Hesiod's story of the equipment of Pandora, and the originally quite unconnected tale of Heracles' rescue of Prometheus from his later imprisonment by Zeus (*Theogony* 521–528), to represent the ensoulment of the world and the soul's retention of the power to raise itself back to the intelligible. The derivation of one order from another indicates that the first adornment of the world is the World Soul, the subsequent one its acquisition of the World Soul's lower phase, *physis* or Nature.

Rather than being concerned with the details of how these myths might apply, Plotinus seems to be treating them with a cavalier disregard for accuracy, and to be playing with words and ideas in an almost Platonic manner. Thus in Hesiod it is not Prometheus who fashions Pandora, but Hephaestus, assisted by Athena, Aphrodite and Hermes, at Zeus's behest. It is the gods who should be the subjects of the infinitives translated "mixed," "put in," "gave": Plotinus has omitted Athena's gift of the skill to weave and, more interestingly, Hermes' insertion of "lies and wheedling words and a thieving disposition," which would not fit his picture of a fundamentally good cosmos.

Epimetheus' choice seems to be Plotinus' rewriting the story to suit his own purposes: Hesiod's Epimetheus accepts the gift, and true to his name—"After-thinker"—realizes his mistake too late.

Heracles' rescue of Prometheus, forecast in Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound* 871–873, does not come in *Theogony* 521–531, which Plotinus presumably had in mind, since he begins with an actual quotation from Hesiod, and goes on to translate the epic *en d' anthrôpou themen audên*, "and placed in her a human voice," into Classical Greek (*anthrôpou entheinai phônên*). In Hesiod, Heracles merely shoots the eagle that was forever eating Prometheus' liver.

As for word-play, the Greek word for adornment, *kosmos*, is the same as that for the ordered universe, the cosmos (cf. line 5: *epekosmêsan autên*, "they adorned her"); Prometheus means "fore-thinker," which is echoed in "foresight" *promêtheia;* and the unexpressed name of Pandora, which all Plotinus' listeners or readers would have known, contains the words for "all" (*pan*) and "gifts" (*dôra*).

On Plotinus' treatment of the Pandora myth, cf. Pépin [1958] 200–201; Lamberton [1989] 103–104; Brisson [2005] n. 303. Pépin adds to Plotinus' changes that Hesiod took the woman's name as "being a gift from all the gods," while Plotinus takes it as "all the gods having given gifts." In fact, Plotinus' reading may be correct, and he has the ancient scholiast on his side; the other view is supported by West [1966] *ad loc*.

14, 1–3 *This ordered universe, which shines already with many lights*: There seems to be a contrast being set up here between already existing "adornments" of the cosmos, such as plant and irrational animal souls, put in place by Nature, and the rational souls that descend now.

14, 4–5 *Both from the gods there and the other intellects*: Who are the "other intellects" mentioned here? There may possibly be a reference to the "pure (intelligible) men" mentioned in the (somewhat earlier) tractate VI.4 [22] 14, 18ff., as representing the higher, undescended aspect of our souls.

14, 11 *Fashioned, as it were, by fore-thinking*: Here the "fore-thinking" (*promêtheia*) of the gods is, bizarrely, attached etymologically to Prometheus, who here seems to fill the role of the lower aspect of the World Soul, Nature.

14, 12 *But what could Epimetheus' rejection of the gift mean?*: This is in such stark contrast with the myth as told by Hesiod, where it is precisely the foolish Epimetheus, the "After-thinker," who accepts the gift, that one manuscript, the *Laurentianus* 87.3 [A], reads "Prometheus"; but it seems pretty clear that Plotinus is either misremembering, or simply rewriting, the traditional version. Epimetheus here seems to represent the force of *epistrophê*, the reversive impulse of the human soul, as it strives for reunion with the intelligible.

14, 14 *And he who fashioned it is himself in bondage*: This assertion, while important for Plotinus' allegorical interpretation, again plays fast and loose with the myth. Prometheus is *not* bound in this story, but in the other version of Zeus' punishment of him for stealing fire from heaven, recounted in the *Theogony* (521ff.), where he is bound to a rock in the Caucasus, from which he is ultimately rescued by Heracles.

14, 15–16 *And the liberation by Heracles*: Heracles here presumably represents either the higher aspect of the World Soul, or the "epistrophic" impulse of that soul, reinforcing its connection to the hypostasis Soul.

14, 17–19 *Now one may interpret this story any way one wishes*: This rather coy little epilogue would seem to suggest that Plotinus recognizes that he has been playing fast and loose with the myth, and does not much care, so long as he can illustrate his point.

Chapter 15

The soul's journey downward, and the causes of differences between souls.

15, 1–23 The souls' first stop in the heavens is again a reminiscence of *Timaeus* 42d: "Having laid down all these ordinances for them, to avoid being responsible for their subsequent wickedness, he sowed some of them in the earth, some in the moon, and some in all the other instruments of time; and what remained to be done after sowing he left to the newly-made gods, who were to fashion mortal bodies and, for the rest, to devise the necessary additions to the human soul and their consequences." It is worth pointing out that there the gods that are the heavenly bodies produce the first body for souls, since some have taken this text as evidence for Plotinus having believed in the quasi-material pneumatic soul-vehicles which were to become a standard feature of late Neoplatonic psychology (so Dodds, *Proclus' Elements*, p. 318, and Theiler, *ad loc.*). The real inventor of the Neoplatonic form of this theory, at least in its simpler one-vehicle form (although Plotinus shows some signs of being aware of it, cf. e.g. III.6.5, 26–29) was Porphyry, cf. *Pathways to the Intelligible* §29, and *To Gaurus* 9. 3. In this case, the souls are assigned vehicles to convey them down to embodiment, but it is not clear whether they are intended to retain those vehicles after embodiment.

We may note, at various points in this chapter, Plotinus' determination to assert at least a measure of autonomy for the human soul, along with all the other fated elements that weigh down upon it (cf. in particular

lines 9–14). In general, he tends to confine the power of fate to the lower soul, leaving the intellect its own master.

15, 3–4 *To the degree to which they are extended in length*: For soul as something stretched out from above to below, cf. V.2 [11] 2, 26–29, where the same word, *ekteinô*, is used; but also III.7 [45] 11, 23–27, where the expression is "expends itself in an extension which renders it weaker" (*dapanôn eis mêkos asthenesteron*). The contrast may be with a disembodied soul maintaining a circular shape and motion. The embodied soul, one might say, goes pear-shaped to varying degrees.

15, 4–7 *Some go from the heavens to the lower level of bodies*: Here Plotinus envisages that the souls themselves descend to different levels according to their own dispositions, which they must have acquired in previous lives, cf. 8, 8–10: he never answers the question that suggests itself, namely what would happen at a theoretical first incarnation (but this is an awkwardness which he shares with Plato himself, after all). This view must be contrasted with the other, which we have already met, also in 8, 6–8, whereby the souls' descent is governed by the nature of the bodies to which they are going, a notion which, as we have noted before, brings with it its own problems; cf. notes on 6, 13–21 above.

We are not convinced that references to the superior status of the heavenly bodies and their greater proximity

to the intelligible (cf. 17, 3–4 below) have any connection with what Armstrong calls the "cosmic religiosity" of late antiquity, but see his note in the Loeb ed. *ad loc*. There is ample warrant for what Plotinus says in the *Timaeus*, and also in Aristotle's views on the nature of the heavenly bodies in his treatise *On the Heavens*, which Plotinus will not, any more than any other ancient philosopher, have realized were subsequently reconsidered.

15, 6–7 *Because of the heaviness laid upon them*: The concepts of "heaviness" (*barynsis*) and consequent "forgetfulness" (*lêthê*) are borrowed from the myth of the *Phaedrus* (248c), where the soul, "as a result of some misfortune is weighed down (*barynthêi*) by its burden of forgetfulness (*lêthê*) and wrong-doing," and loses its wings. Cf. Smith [1974] 152, who compares Plotinus' concept of *barynsis* here with that of Porphyry in *Pathways to the Intelligible*, §29.

15, 7–10 *They become different*: On the sources of differences in souls, which theoretically should have none, cf. ch. 8 above, and the notes there.

15, 11 *To the fate that rules here*: The "fate" (*heimarmenê*) that Plotinus speaks of is at first sight incompatible with the autonomy, such as it still is at the lower levels, of souls. It should be understood as the pattern derived from the

intelligible modified by the constraints of the material world. Such souls are also envisaged at II.3 [52] 9, 27–30.

15, 12–22 When souls act on their own they are operating without the lower soul's need of the body for its operation, and therefore at the level of the discursive reason in the first place: that is often, if not always, the level at which the human "self" is to be found. Cf. O'Daly 1973, 21–49. Elsewhere Plotinus argues that we can be autonomous by means of virtuous action and resistance to the body and its desires; cf. III.1 [3] 8–9.

15, 21–22 *The responsibility resides in what has come down*: This statement may be seen as an oblique reference to *Republic* X 617e5: "The fault lies not with God, but with the soul that makes the choice."

Chapter 16

An interlude: punishments, justice and evil. Fate and cosmic order.

16, 1–25 One might ask why Plotinus diverts from what has been in the main a rather straightforward discussion

of the manner of and the reasons for the soul's descent to talk about justice. While the problem is certainly part of his Platonic heritage (cf. in particular the passage of theodicy in *Laws* X, 904bc), it is notorious that Plotinus is less concerned with the social and political parts of Plato than with anything that could be treated as metaphysics; cf. Theiler's well-known comment that Plotinus was a "Plato dimidiatus" ([1960] 67). But for him the "existence" of evil was a metaphysical problem, and the point of the present discussion is to continue the search for the factors that control or at least influence the depth of the soul's descent at any given incarnation. Plotinus has already shown that he regards the deeds done in previous lives as one such factor, cf. 8, 6–10 above.

16, 5–6 *For these things are woven into the texture of the whole*: This sentence does not state Plotinus' own view, but explains the previous question, and gives reasons for thinking the hypothesis may be correct. The argument against it begins with what follows. For the idea of the world as a textile into which its individual components are woven, cf. also the previous chs. 15–20, and 17 below; and II.3 [52] 18.

16, 9–10 *Or when a pair of horses*: In fact, "horses" (*hippôn*) is a conjecture of Theiler's (*ad loc.*) for the *tinôn* ("some") of the manuscripts, but some such emendation was necessary.

16, 11–12 *While it is bad for its victim*: On the whole, it seems best to delete the negative in this sentence (sc. the *ou* before *kakon*). It is hard to see what sense it can make to say that the disasters just mentioned are not bad for the person who suffers, while there is a point in contrasting what is a misfortune for an individual with the welfare of the cosmos as a whole. While Plotinus is certainly prepared to entertain the idea, familiar from Plato (cf. e.g. *Gorgia*s 497a–c), that injustice is bad for the person who does it and less so for the victim, and talks about that later in the chapter (cf. 17–21), that is not the point he is making here.

16, 13–25 For the world as an ordered system into which even the smallest things fit, cf. already Plato, *Laws* X 903b–e, which seems to be an influence on Plotinus here. The present assertion of the universality of the cosmic order (13–15) is not intended to negate Plotinus' conviction that the higher soul is superior to fate; what he wants to deny here is the idea, popular with Middle Platonist defenders of "what is in our power," and of a degree of randomness, such as Alcinous (in the *Handbook of Platonism*, chapter 26), that there is any leeway in the chain of cause and effect governing the physical cosmos.

16, 17 *Even the smaller things . . . have been woven in with the others*: On the weaving metaphor, see the note on 5–6 above.

16, 17–21 On injustice being bad for the doer, see note on 11–12 above. For the idea that it is a part of the world order which is nevertheless good when seen as a whole—perhaps one of the "hidden doctrines" in Plotinus' thought derived from Stoicism (cf. *Life of Plotinus*, 14, 4–5)—see esp. III.3 [48] 5–7.

16, 23 *One must consider that this order is "not without god"*: "Not without god" (*ouk atheei*) comes from *Odyssey* 18. 353, but unlike some tags from epic poetry in Plotinus, the original context of this one has nothing to do with his subject here: it is taken from the mocking speech of one of the suitors to Odysseus.

Chapter 17

Another way of representing the soul's descent and its relation to both higher reality and to what lies below it.

17, 1–31 Plotinus now returns to a number of themes that he has been developing in previous chapters relative to the descent of souls, employing two of his favorite images, that of light and that of concentric circles around a center. The

heavenly realm is privileged, as being nearest to the intelligible, but some aspects of his presentation are somewhat problematical. First of all, it might seem doubtful as to whether the center of the circles is intended as Intellect, or as the One. Intellect, after all, in comparison to Soul, is neither spatially nor temporally extended, and so could be viewed as a point by contrast with Soul; but in view of Plotinus' other uses of this image (see below), we are content to leave it as the One.

Then there is his remark (7–9) that "all souls illuminate the heaven, and give as it were the bulk of themselves and their first part to it." What, one might ask, does this refer to? Surely not the "undescended" part of the soul, since that properly remains in the intelligible realm. It seems most probable that what Plotinus intends here to associate with the heavenly realm is the rational part of the descended soul, in contrast with the sense-perceptive (*aisthêtikê*) part, which he associates with the sublunar realm, but in the case of human souls, at least, there must be a purely symbolic element to this, since the rational part of the descended soul cannot be regarded as literally remaining in the heavens.

17, 1–4 *It might be deduced that the souls first go . . . to the region of the heaven*: For the heaven as the best part of the sensible world, and thereby closest to the intelligible, cf. 15, 1 above, and note there. The proximity is not, of

course, spatial, but one of value and ontological status. Notwithstanding Armstrong's detection of a "creeping spatiality," here (note *ad loc.*), there is little if any difference between Plotinus' way of illustrating the relative status of the components of his intelligible and sensible worlds and the normal Platonic way of talking about better forms of being "above," others which are lower. In fact it is very difficult to avoid spatial terms in such contexts in English, just as much as in Greek: we have substituted "better" for the more natural translation "superior." It may indeed be the case, as Armstrong remarks (*loc. cit.*) that Plotinus is influenced here by the imagery of the *Phaedrus* myth (esp. 246d–247e).

17, 4–8 *So this is the first thing to be ensouled from there*: Note again the application of the principle that bodies receive soul in proportion as they are fit or able to do so: the heavenly bodies are the best kind of body and so receive, as it were, the "first pressing" of soul, which is better than the inferior kind available to things in the sublunary world.

17, 9–10 *All souls, then, illuminate the heaven*: That the higher intelligibles also illuminate things illumined by soul will be attributable to their greater power, cf. 6, 21–24 above, and note on 6, 17–21.

17, 10–12 *And it is not better for them*: Plotinus again writes as if souls had no control over their destinations and were obliged to depart from their homes in the intelligible to an extent that is actually harmful to them; cf. 12, 5–8 above.

17, 13–14 *Light coming from light*: It is hard not to see the phrase *phôs ek phôtos* (which Plotinus has earlier employed also at VI.4 [22] 9, 27) as an echo, albeit perhaps ironic, of the contemporary Christian formulation characterizing the relationship between the Father and the Son (e.g. Hippolytus, *Against Noetus*, 10. 4. 4, etc.; Pseudo-Justin Martyr, *Exposition of the True Faith*, p. 380 Morel). The formulation becomes later, of course, from the Cappadocian Fathers on, a standard characterization of the *non-subordination* of the Son to the Father.

17, 12–26 Intelligible reality and the sensible world are here compared to concentric circles, or spheres. The circle is an image much used by Plotinus to convey the relations of one kind of being to another, and has the advantage of avoiding up/down vocabulary: in this respect the sphere is a refinement of the circle, which has to be in one plane or another. The center, in so far as it is a point and therefore has no even notional extension, appropriately represents the One, while the derivation from it of the light which stands for intelligibility—as already in *Republic* VI 509a—indicates the causal dependence of everything on the One

without the One actually doing or causing anything else by any kind of action or activity of its own. The first circle is Intellect, the second Soul, and the third (which Plotinus, to emphasize its three-dimensionality, represents rather as a sphere) the material world, which depends for its order and intelligibility on the light shed on it by Soul.

For concentric circles, cf. also VI.9 [9] 8, 1–30, where the center is also our center, with Meijer's and Hadot's notes *ad loc*. For a slightly different but related analogy, where the One is the center of a circle and other things at the ends of its radii, cf. V.1 [10] 11, 4–13. On both of these see further Meijer's "Appendix on Centrology in Plotinus (circle, center, radii)," at the end of his notes on VI.9.8, pp. 242–245. It is worth noting that both illumination and irradiation are common metaphors for the soul's relation to body, cf. note on 10, 38–40 above. There is a notable use of this image also at VI.5 [23] 4–5, in connection with the unity and omnipresence of the intelligible.

17, 16 *Or rather, a sphere of that kind*: That is to say, one without its own light. The physical world is the product of matter being "enlightened" by the lower aspect of the World Soul, sc. Nature.

17, 17 *Which receives from the third one*: There is a slight inconcinnity here, since Soul is not the third circle, or rather sphere, as indicated by the feminine form of the

word for "third" (*tritês*), but the third "layer" of the intelligible, of which the point at the center is the first.

17, 20 *Some remaining where they are*: Those things that "remain where they are" are the One and Intellect with its contents in the first place, but will include souls that have not at a given time descended, and in any case the World Soul which, as we have seen, controls the world while remaining above and undisturbed by its task; cf. 5, 24–25 above, and note there.

17, 20–22 *Others are drawn out to a greater extent*: On individual souls, unlike the World Soul, being drawn down by their care for what they are associated with, cf. 4, 21–37 above. Being drawn by the brightness suggests an element of seduction by the superficial attractions of the worse. The same idea is present in the notion at 26–27 that souls are tied to the material world by some kind of sorcery.

17, 22–26 *Just as when boats are in a storm*: The helmsman in a ship as a paradigm for the soul's presence in the body is rejected when Plotinus comes to discuss the mode of that presence more precisely in chs. 20–21; cf. 21, 3–21. Here the risk of going down with the ship is another way of indicating that souls that pay too much attention to the body will be adversely affected by so doing; cf. note on 7, 20–25 above.

Chapter 18

The use of calculation: a symptom of departure from the intelligible.

18, 1–24 Plotinus here raises an issue to which he will return later in the treatise (IV.4.12), in connection with his discussion of memory. Calculation (*logismos*), or deliberative reasoning, is a sign of weakness, because its purpose is to answer questions and solve problems. At the level of intellect, or of a being assimilated to intellect, as soul is before its descent, there is no need for these procedures, because intellect is in possession of all truth, which is what it is, and therefore has no need for answers and solutions. In the reverse direction, deliberative reasoning stops when it has attained the object of its quest: it then becomes identical with it, all process ceases, and at that point reasoning becomes intellection; cf. esp. I.3 [20] 4, and IV.4.12, 5–13 below, and for further discussion, Blumenthal 1971, 107–109.

18, 7–9 *But one might ask*: A question that might reasonably be put by an interlocutor, amounting to "where did souls acquire the power of reasoning if they did not have it in the intelligible?" The answer that Plotinus gives, that they had the potentiality, or capacity—whichever *dynamis*

means here—may be supplemented by the observation that everything that exists in this world comes from the intelligible, but is better there (cf. V.8 [31] 7, 17–21), and that everything the inhabitants of the sensible need for their lives here is represented in the ideal world, which is Intellect; cf. esp. VI.7.9, 35–10, 7, on how what were Forms of animals acquire what they need for their lives here, and the presence of even horns in Intellect, with Hadot's notes *ad loc.*

18, 9–13 *One must think of calculation, after all, as something like this*: The reasoning Plotinus calls *logismos* here is not, *pace* Theiler, *ad loc.*, higher than the usual sort of reasoning. Indeed it has been suggested that *dianoia* and its cognates refer to a higher type of thinking than the *logismos* group of words; so by Schwyzer 1960, 366 and 390. In fact, both groups of words are used interchangeably, cf. esp. V.3.2, 7–3, 2, and for further discussion, Blumenthal 1971, 100–103. The whole point of what Plotinus says here is that *logismos* in the intelligible is not reasoning at all, as is shown by his description of it as a "static activity" (*energeia hestôsa*). That is the opposite of the normal characterization of reasoning as a process of transition from one thing to another. Thus the "something like a reflection (*hoion emphasin*)" in line 12 is of itself, as in looking at oneself in a mirror, Intellect being its own object: Theiler's conjectured insertion of the word *nou* (*hoion emphasin <nou> ousan*), changing the

meaning into a reflection of Intellect, as if at a lower level, is therefore worse than unnecessary.

18, 13–22 The reasons for there being no speech in the intelligible are basically the same as those which make discursive reasoning unnecessary: everything there already has knowledge of whatever else is there, so that there is no need for communication. Plotinus uses in this connection the term *synesis*, 19: we have rendered *en synesei* by "intuitively." On the absence of speech in the intelligible, cf. IV.4.5, 21–22 below.

18, 14–15 *Even if they have bodies*: This seems to be a reference to celestial "soul-vehicles," such as are mentioned above in 15, 1–3.

18, 19–20 *For down here too*: A most acute observation by Plotinus, that one may even in the physical realm acquire an intuitive understanding of a situation merely from the look in people's eyes, without the need for speech.

18, 22–24 *But in the case of daemons and souls in the air*: For a more extensive discussion of the distinctions between gods and daemons, see III.5 [50] 6.

Third Problem: The Manner of the Soul's Embodiment (chs. 19–23)

The manner of the soul's association with the body. Plotinus now looks again at the nature of the soul, and then proceeds to discuss various ways in which it might be said to be in the body, before offering his own solution. This section represents one of the more scholastic parts of the treatise, somewhat comparable to the early work IV.7 [2] 1–8[5].

Chapter 19

An introductory exegesis of the division of the soul in Timaeus *35a–b.*

19, 1–34 Plotinus begins this topic with a renewed discussion of the significance of "indivisible" and "divisible" as they relate to the soul. Here he returns to the interpretation of *Timaeus* 35a, which he has previously discussed in detail in IV.2 [4] and IV.1 [21], and also, with particular reference to what is divisible *peri ta sômata*, "around bodies," earlier in this treatise, in ch. 4; cf. the note on 4, 13 above. This chapter serves as something of a bridge-passage,

introducing the next problem, but is best included with it. The way in which the sense-perceptive aspect of the soul is present to the body is also explored further at IV.4.18ff.

19, 1–5 *Are the "indivisible" and "divisible" in the same place . . . ?*: This whole discussion takes its start from an exegesis of *Timaeus* 35a, which seems to employ spatial language in describing the two "parts" of the soul, and which therefore Plotinus judges worthy of critical analysis.

19, 6–8 *Now he uses the term "indivisible" in an absolute sense*: The subject of these remarks is Plato; the point of them that, according to the interpretation of *Timaeus* 35a adopted by Plotinus, divisibility is linked with embodiment: the make-up of soul includes an element that is not originally divided, but will be divided as soon as it is associated with the body. It is a further part of this interpretation, not mentioned here, that Plato also uses "divisible" simply, and that that refers to bodies; cf. IV.1.1, 29–41.

19, 8 *The soul becomes "divisible"*: The point of this remark is that the soul only acquires divisibility by virtue of its association with body, and that it does not otherwise possess this characteristic. If it did, that would be inconsistent with the position that all souls are basically one soul.

19, 8–15 *We must look at the nature of the body*: Plotinus now proceeds to analyze more closely the precise significance of the phrase "becoming divided around bodies" (*peri ta sômata ginomenê meristê*). He sees this as giving due emphasis to the fact that the sense-perceptive aspect of the soul, while being "everywhere" (*pantakhou*), and thus in some sense extended, is yet "everywhere as a whole" (*holon pantakhou*), in accordance with its immaterial nature.

19, 15–19 *Now if someone were to say*: The sense of touch is the most obviously "extended" or "divided" of the senses, but Plotinus insists that all of the others are also to a certain extent, in so far as they have to do with the body.

19, 22–24 *But perhaps he does not include these in that mixture*: Plato is best taken as the subject of the verb *paralambanei*, "include" (22), though HS suggest that it is the body that is the subject. The verb may be an echo of Plato's *symparalambanêi* at *Phaedo* 65b1, but the idea that desire and anger are not part of the soul mixture is more in line with *Timaeus* 69c–71d, where they are housed in their own segregated parts of the body. Cf. also 23, 35–45 below, and IV.4.18–21, where Plotinus makes clearer his view that such functions as the vegetative faculty and the passions and desires arising from it belong rather to the "shadow" or "image" of soul than to the soul proper.

19, 24–26 *And reason and intellect?*: Reason and intellect may be described as giving—or not giving—themselves to body consistently with the view of the soul making itself available to a body in a condition to receive it. The argument that they do not do so because the body is an obstacle (*empodion*) picks up a point raised in similar words in the *Phaedo*, 65a9–10, where the body is also described as an obstacle (*empodion*), but for Plato the consequence is different: the body's being an impediment does not mean that reason and intellect are not part of the body-soul compound, but merely that the body is an impediment to the exercise of the soul's rational powers. We should recall that in the *Phaedo* the soul is unitary and not yet tripartite, a distinction that Plotinus and other later Platonists did not observe, perhaps because they took the vocabulary of tripartition to be a way of talking about a soul that was not really tripartite, to be used primarily in ethical contexts. On this question in Plotinus, cf. Blumenthal 1971, 21–25. In Aristotle, intellect is the only possible candidate for being separate from the body-soul unit; cf. e.g. *On the Soul* 413b24–7.

19, 27–34 *Not mixed together . . . but separate in their power*: The point is that the "parts" of the soul, being immaterial, are incapable of being mixed; the difference between the several powers or faculties is, in the last resort, a specific difference. In so far as divisible and indivisible are identified

with different entities, the former is the irrational soul, the latter the rational faculties; in so far as the former is not simply divisible, but "becoming divisible about bodies," it acquires such indivisibility as it has from that higher part of soul of which it is an image.

19, 32 *The same thing can be divisible and indivisible*: "The same thing" is the embodied soul.

Chapter 20

An enquiry into the mode of the soul's presence in the body. Is soul in body as in a place?

20, 1–51 Chapters 20–21 provide one of the few places in Plotinus where there is a strong case for his direct use of Alexander of Aphrodisias: the case might be stronger if we still had Alexander's commentary on Aristotle *On the Soul* (on which see further Blumenthal 1968). Our only basis of comparison is his own treatise *On the Soul*, which, while it will have been based on the same personal philosophy, does not necessarily reflect either the order of exposition or the vocabulary of the commentary. Strong though some of the similarities may be, we cannot prove that the

discussion is derived from the parallel text in Alexander, *On the Soul* 13, 9–15, 26. In particular, the list of senses of "in" could be taken from another of the commentators on Aristotle, such as Aspasius, whom Porphyry tells us that Plotinus used (*Life of Plotinus* 14, 10–14), or Alexander's commentary on Aristotle's *Physics*, also lost, and there are, in any case, points that could have been taken from the original discussion in *Physics* IV, esp. 3–4, 210a14–212a30.

In any case, Alexander, like Plotinus, rejects the following ways in which the soul might be said to be "in" the body:

as part of a whole (14, 3–9)
as whole in a part (14, 10.11)
in place as interval or limit of the container (14, 17–21)
as in a vessel (14, 23–24)
as in a substrate (14, 24–15, 5)
(f) as steersman in a ship (15, 9–26)

He also rejects three other possibilities not mentioned by Plotinus, "as species in a genus" (14, 11–14), and vice versa (14, 14–17), and "as ingredients in a mixture" (15, 5–9). Alexander, of course, accepts "as form in matter" (15, 27–16, 7), which Plotinus does not.

20, 1–3 *Whether these and the other so-called parts of the soul*: "These" are the reason and intellect referred to in the previous chapter, where they were said not to be in

the body, cf. 19, 24–26 above; "the others" are the lower, sub-rational, faculties.

20, 9–11 *If we assign a place to some parts and not to others*: As far as Plotinus is concerned, some of the soul is not actually in us. In the present context that is an argument against the appropriateness of the description "in place," since that view of the soul's association with body would be inconsistent with Plotinus' view of how the several faculties operate and relate to the body. The whole argument against the soul's presence in the body as if it were a place, here and in what follows, is based on the unsatisfactory consequences of such an assumption.

20, 12–24 *Place as a container*: According to Aristotle, of whose discussion there are several possible reminiscences in this chapter, place is the (inner) limit of the body that contains something, *Physics* IV 4 212a5–6. What it contains is body, so that what is in the container cannot, by its definition, be a Platonic soul—or an Aristotelian one. That in itself should rule out this view of "being in," but Plotinus adds the further argument that the content, being body, would be divided, and therefore each part would be in a part of the space, so that the whole cannot be, as soul would have to be if the analogy were to be acceptable.

20, 15–19 *Nor yet is it in a body as in a vessel*: The vessel (*angeion*) is simply a variant of the notion of the container, as is shown by the continued use of containing vocabulary. Aristotle had given it as an example of being in place, *Physics* IV 209b28, 211b16, but the closest parallel to Plotinus' comments here is in Alexander (?), *Mantissa*, 115. 32–33, which also says that if the soul were in the body as a container the body would have no soul. Plotinus may, however, have supplied what is a fairly obvious objection to explain the simple rejection of the vessel as place in Alexander's *On the Soul*: the objection is, of course, based on the view of place as the limit of the container, so that the rest of the container would have no direct contact with a soul in that place. A vessel as a place for soul was a commonplace idea by Plotinus' time: it can already be found in Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* 1. 22. 52, perhaps following Antiochus; Philo, *On the Migration of Abraham* 193 & 197; *On Dreams* 1. 26; and Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, 3. 3. Marcus is much the most likely of the three to have been read by Plotinus.

Diadosis, "transmission," as a mode of the soul's operation, has been criticized in previous treatises, cf. IV.7 [2] 7, 7–22; IV.2 [4] 2, 14–35: it has a place in the Stoics' materialist explanation of how sensations at the surface of the body are passed to the controlling part of the soul, and as such the supposed need for it on the hypothesis proposed is an argument against that hypothesis.

20, 19–20 *But place in the strict sense is incorporeal*: This may be another example of Plotinus' predilection for using the position of an opponent to argue against a view he wishes to refute, place being one of the four Stoic incorporeals, cf. *SVF* 2. 331. The Stoics did not, of course, hold that soul was in an immaterial place, but that it was one body permeating another. If, however, place is incorporeal, it cannot be what the body is in relation to the soul, since the soul is "in" a material body.

20, 22–24 *Thus the place would be always carried around with it*: An extension of previous points about place as container. The argument seems clear enough, that, if the soul were in a place, that place, if it were the body, would be moving with the soul. But the place, *qua* container, would have to have something outside it that carried it, since the place can only exist by virtue of what surrounds it. The text we have, however, does not convey a clear meaning, so that there would seem to be a case for a light emendation of the text in l. 23: *allo* for the *auto* of the mss. As the text stands, it would have to be translated, against the natural order of the Greek: "there will be something which itself carries the place around" (cf. Armstrong: "and body itself would be something carrying space itself about").

20, 24–27 *And even if place were taken to be bare extension*: Space as an interval: this view was actually held by the

Stoics, cf. *SVF* 2. 505–506, but its mention, as a possibility, at *Physics* IV 209b6 and 211b7–8, as well as by Alexander (*On the Soul* p. 14, 19–23), are perhaps more likely to explain why Plotinus gives it a place in his discussion. That the interval would be empty—or a void—was part of Alexander's brief rejection, whereas Plotinus spells out that if there were nothing there it cannot be body: he does not think it necessary to spell out further that this is so because body is a plenum.

20, 28–30 *Nor yet will it be in the body as in a substrate*: According to Alexander (*On the Soul* p. 14, 24–15, 5), soul could not be in body as in a substrate because soul is substance, in the Aristotelian sense of substance, which can be predicated of nothing. Plotinus could not use this argument, because for him substance means real being in the special Platonic sense. His own argument is plain enough: what is in a substrate is a quality or affection of it, and soul is neither.

20, 30–34 *Part in whole*: The "wine in a jar" example is not in Alexander *On the Soul*, but we know from Simplicius' *Physics* commentary that it was discussed in his commentary on that work, as well as in that of Aspasius (cf. Simplicius, *On the Physics* 558, 29–37). Since it occurs more than once in the *Physics* itself (cf. e.g. 201a30–32), Plotinus may have it from there. This is one of the cases where it would

be interesting to know whether his method of reading works with commentaries, described by Porphyry (*Life of Plotinus* 14. 10–14), was confined to reading the specific commentary on a given work, or included others that could be useful: we have no way of telling. A similar view, that the body was related to the soul as a cup to the drink in it, was known to Varro (in Augustine, *City of God* 19. 3): again, Antiochus may be behind this. What is not clear is what Plotinus means by saying not only that soul is not in the body as the wine is in the jar, but also that it is not there as the jar is in itself. Perhaps the jar here is being regarded as a measure, e.g. a gallon (this is how Armstrong, for instance, seems to take it, cf. his translation: "for it is not, presumably, as the wine is in the jar of wine, or the gallon in the gallon jar"). "Being in itself" (l. 34) occurs in almost the same words at Aristotle *Physics* 210b12–13, but the resemblance could be fortuitous.

20, 35–36 *Whole in parts*: This is rejected out of hand: if the body constituted parts of the soul, that would make the soul material, and so is impossible *ex hypothesi*. Plotinus states simply that this is ridiculous, and his strong statement should not be watered down by making it potential, as do all translators, with the honourable exception of Ficino.

20, 37–39 *Form in matter*: This is the standard Peripatetic view of the soul, and therefore the one accepted by

Alexander. Plotinus' argument against it assumes his view that the soul informs body by producing a lower projection of itself which is not soul but some sort of image of it (cf. note on 10, 38–40 above). Later Platonists would describe the lowest level of soul as what makes the form in the body, cf. e.g. Ps.-Simplicius, *On Aristotle On the Soul* 90. 30: *hôs organon eidopoieitai*, "it is given form as an instrument."

20, 41–45 *So how is it that the soul is universally declared to be in the body?*: Having rejected all these ways in which soul might be in body, Plotinus now asks why people have inferred from the body's having movement and perception that there must be a soul in it, when body can be seen and soul cannot. This reason for inferring the soul's presence is as old as Epicurus, cf. *Letter to Herodotus*, in Diogenes Laertius 10. 63, and the pseudo-Aristotelian *On the World* 399b14–15, but cf. also *Timaeus* 36e: the body of the heaven is visible, but the World Soul is not.

20, 45–46 *And so it would seem to follow*: Plotinus now concludes this stage of the discussion by agreeing that it is reasonable to infer that soul is in the body, and continues his so far unsuccessful search for the correct way of describing the relation.

20, 46–51 *If, on the other hand*: That the body should be in the soul rather than vice versa is Plato's position in the

Timaeus, cf. 34b and 36e, but that it should be visible is only a supposition for the sake of argument: there can be no question that Plotinus ever thought that the soul could be seen. The idea that the soul holds body together occurs in Aristotle, *On the Soul* I 5, 411b7–8, but the description here may owe something to Stoicism, cf. e.g. *SVF* 2. 439. All this is in any case to be read as a metaphor, designed to correct our facile view of the relation between soul and body.

Chapter 21

The mode of the soul's presence in body, continued.

21, 1–21 Plotinus now turns to examine some rather more plausible senses in which the soul might be "in" the body, (a) as the helmsman is in the ship, and (b) as the skill is in the tools. Neither of these, however, proves satisfactory.

21, 1–5 *Well then, how is it present?*: We are here presented, in an interesting way, with the scenario of an imaginary questioner, who asks about the mode of the soul's presence in the body, "while making no suggestion himself." This may well reflect the realities of the seminar, as Porphyry

portrays it in *Life of Plotinus* ch. 13: "At one time I myself kept interrogating him over three days as to how the soul is associated with the body." Indeed, as suggested in the introduction, this treatise may be seen, partly at least, as a response to Porphyry's persistent interrogation.

21, 5–11 The image of the helmsman (*kybernêtês*) in the ship is employed by Aristotle, in *On the Soul* 413a9ff., and discussed by Alexander, in his treatise *On the Soul* p. 15, 9–28—except that in Aristotle what is mentioned is only a passenger (*plôtêr*), while Alexander, in his discussion, speaks rather of a "helmsman," and Plotinus follows him in this. Alexander may have been influenced here by the image of the "helmsman" of the soul at Plato, *Phaedrus* 247c, as would Plotinus also be, and it certainly suits Plotinus to emphasize the commanding role of the soul in the body, which Aristotle's use of the term "sailor" tends to downgrade. As Plotinus remarks, the helmsman as sailor is only "incidentally" (*kata symbebêkos*) in the body, whereas as helmsman he has an essential function.

21, 11–21 *So should we say that it is like a skill in its tools . . . ?*: Plotinus' second image is a refinement of his first, and indicates why he needs the soul as helmsman rather than merely as a sailor. He now raises the possibility of the soul *as immanent in the body*, serving rather as a tool (*organon*), in this case a helm, or steering-oar (*oiax*), with its steering

skill, its *tekhnê*, inherent in it. This interesting thought-experiment comes quite near, in fact, to Aristotle's own theory of soul as "first entelechy of a living organic body," with the important distinction that Plotinus is not giving up on the concept of the soul as a distinct essence, and there he still has a problem, as he recognizes (19–20), as to how the motive and directive *tekhnê* comes to be in the tool; for Aristotle, of course, the soul just *is* the living body *qua* active, so he does not feel that he has to concern himself with how it comes to be there.

Chapter 22

Might the soul be in the body as fire or light is in air—or rather should we say that the body is in the soul?

22, 1–7 *So should we say, then, that . . . it is present in the way that fire is present to air?*: We must conceive of a fire emanating light to a surrounding body of air, whether in an enclosed space or not. Plotinus' position is that the light from the fire is present *to* the air, but not mixed in it—and so "while being present, is not present" (*paron ou paresti*, a turn of phrase which recurs in the late treatise I.1.11, 9). If the air (which he postulates as "flowing by") passes out

of range of the light, it retains nothing of it, and yet the light pervaded it when it was there. The omnipresence of soul in body could be seen as analogous to this.

22, 7–11 *The air is in the light*: Or better still, as Plato puts it in *Timaeus* 36d7–e1 (cf. also 34b4), the body can be viewed as being inside the soul. In the *Timaeus*, this is primarily a reference to the relation of the World Soul to its body, the cosmos, but Plotinus takes it, reasonably, to apply to the individual soul as well. This formulation pleases Plotinus, and he makes use of it frequently elsewhere, e.g. IV.7 [2] 4, 7; V.1 [10] 10, 21; III.9 [13] 3, 3; V.5 [32] 9, 29ff.; it is a concept that pervades the treatise *On the Omnipresence of Being* (VI.4–5). Of course, as he adds, this does not necessitate that all faculties of the soul are pervaded by body—a reference, no doubt, to pure intellection, but also, perhaps, to his doctrine of the undescended soul.

22, 11–17 *And indeed the same account applies in the case of the other souls*: A continuation of the previous thought. In the case of the sense-perceptive power of the soul, Plotinus wishes to specify that, while the power itself, being immaterial, is present equally everywhere in the body, the various aspects of it (such as taste, smell, or hearing) are only operative in relation to the physical sense-organs (characterized here as *energeiai*, "activities" or "actualizations") adapted to receiving them.

Chapter 23

Continuation of the foregoing: a more detailed consideration of how the various faculties interact with the appropriate organs; and a discussion of the relation between the sense of touch and the brain, through the agency of the nerves.

23, 1–9 *What I mean is this*: Plotinus begins by recalling the imagery of illumination from the previous section, and runs through all the senses in turn, beginning with the most exalted, sight, and ending with the most generally distributed, touch.

23, 8 *For this type of perception*: For the use of *antilêpsis*, here translated "apprehension," which is Plotinus' most favored general term for any sort of cognitive act, cf. below, line 31, and 30, 11, but also e.g. I.4.10, 4–6; V.1.12, 13; VI .7.7, 25–27.

23, 9–21 *Since the organs of touch are situated at the first points of the nerves*: The mention of the sense of touch in turn leads to a most interesting description of the nervous system, with the nerves portrayed as extending outward and downward from the brain, which is the seat and center of conscious and purposeful activity. None of this, of course, was known to Plato, but was a discovery of the Hellenistic

physicians Herophilus of Chalcedon and Erasistratus of Ceos in Alexandria in the first half of the third century B.C. Plotinus probably derived his knowledge of the nervous system from the works of Galen.

The brain itself, we may note, as the source of the senses of hearing, sight, and smell, from which arise memory and opinion (*mnêmê kai doxa*), is mentioned by Socrates in the *Phaedo* (96b), in the course of his "autobiography"; in *Timaeus* 44de, where the head is discussed, the brain is not mentioned.

23, 21–34 *So since the power of sense-perception and impulse*: Plotinus now adduces a more properly Platonic reason for the faculties of *aisthêsis* and *phantasia* to be in the head, which is that they are thus adjacent to the rational part of the soul, the *logos* (cf. *Timaeus* 44de), which does not itself connect with any specific part of the body, but rather with these faculties, which, as Plotinus points out, each have an intellectual aspect, *aisthêsis* being "in a way formative of judgments" (*kritikon pôs*), while the *phantasia* is "as it were intellective" (*hoion noeron*)—we may note in either case the Plotinian qualifiers! They thus constitute suitable intermediaries between mind and body, their *antilêpseis* of influences from "above" resulting in impulse (*hormê*) and appetition (*orexis*)—*orexis*, arising from *phantasia*, presumably stimulating *hormê*, arising from *aisthêsis*. This is a topic that will be explored in more detail below, in IV.4.18–29.

Plotinus' terminology here seems to owe a good deal to Aristotle's observations on *aisthêsis* and *phantasia* in his treatise *On the Soul*. We may start with his general statement in I 1, 403a8–9, that "in most cases it seems that none of the affections, whether active or passive, can exist apart from the body"; but he then makes a tentative exception for intellection (*to noein*), though qualifying this with the observation that "if this is a kind of imagination (*phantasia*), or at least is dependent upon imagination, even this cannot exist apart from the body." Aristotle, of course, does regard imagination as inseparable from intellection, whereas Plotinus does not. Then, in II 11, 424a3ff., we learn that sense-perception operates by being a mean between extremes of sensation, which it can then pass judgments on: "for it is in the mean that lies the power of discernment (*to gar meson kritikon*), Again, at III 9, 432a16ff., Aristotle states that the soul in living creatures is distinguished by two functions, "the judging capacity (*to kritikon*), which is a function of the intellect and sensation combined, and the capacity for generating spatial movement." On the subject of *phantasia*, in turn, at III 3, 427b28ff. he firmly identifies it as a feature of *noein*, and at III 10, 433a10ff., we are told that "there appear, then, to be these two motive forces, appetite (*orexis*) and intellection (*nous*)—that is, if one regards imagination (*phantasia*) as a sort of intellective process (*noêsis tis*)." *Phantasia*, however, is an inferior form of *noêsis*. Not every *orexis* generated by *phantasia* will be

acted upon; they will often, at least in rational animals, be resisted by *nous*.

One can see here, arguably, the creative way in which Plotinus makes use of the treatise *On the Soul*, which was undoubtedly a major influence on his thinking, despite his rejection of its chief doctrines.

23, 25–26 *As not being in the brain*: The point of this distinction presumably is that the *aisthêtikon*, as a faculty of the soul, should not be thought of as being *in* the brain, but rather related to it as described above (in 15–21), the brain being the physical location adapted to receive it.

23, 31 *Antilêpsis* is used again here (cf. line 8 above) to characterize the reception of impressions from a higher level of soul by a lower.

23, 33–45 *So the reasoning faculty is there, not as in a place*: Plotinus now turns to a consideration of the liver, as base for the veins that provide the blood with which the vegetative level of soul (*phytikon*) nourishes the body, and of the heart, which provides the "light, thin, active" blood that constitutes a substrate for the spirited part of the soul (*thymos*). Here he is able to depend closely on the *Timaeus* (70d–71d), though no doubt viewed through the prism of Galen's interpretations, both in his *Commentary on the Timaeus*, and in his treatise *On the Doctrines of Hippocrates*

and Plato (VI.8, 77). Cf. also Alexander of Aphrodisias, *On the Soul* 40. 1–3; Aristotle, *Parts of Animals* III 4, 666a7–8; *On Dreams* 3, 458a15–16, where Aristotle reaffirms that "the source of all blood is the heart"—though for him the "rarest and purest blood" is to be found in the head.

23, 34 *"There"*: Sc. in the brain.

23, 40 *Since this is where the power exerts its force*: The rare compound *enapereidô*, employed by Plotinus twice elsewhere in this treatise (viz., line 18 above, and 17, 23; noun *enapereisis* at IV.4.1, 26), is also used once by Galen (*On Affected Places*, p. 196, 8 Kühn), which may be significant. In either instance of its use in this chapter, Plotinus employs a cautionary *hoion*, indicating that he finds the concept indicated by the verb rather strong.

Fourth Problem: The Soul's Departure from the Body: What Does It Remember and How; and to What Level or Levels of Being is Memory Properly Appropriate? (chs. 3, 24–4, 17)

The order of exposition is interesting. While one might expect the discussion of the reasons for the soul's descent and the mode of its presence in the body to be followed by a discussion of the various functions pertaining to its presence there, some of which have already been

brought into the consideration of the second of these questions, Plotinus now passes directly to what happens after death. In so far as this raises questions about imagination and memory, the persistence of which seems to Plotinus essential to the survival of the individual person, the topic would most naturally come after Plotinus has dealt with the activities of the faculties below imagination and memory, which he does in IV.4.18–29; in so far as it deals with what happens after a given period of life in the body, it would be appropriate to deal with it after all the issues arising from that presence had been treated. As it is, the activities of the rational faculties are mentioned only in so far as they are needed to explain others, and receive no special treatment in this treatise. The extended treatment of memory, however, does involve an examination of the various levels of consciousness characteristic of the human soul.

Chapter 24

The fate of souls after they have left the body; and the punishments awaiting sinful souls.

24, 1–28 This chapter could be described as a meditation in the manner of Plato on what happens to the soul after

death. As such, it constitutes a sort of bridge between the previous topic and the present one, but it seems best to regard it as introductory to what follows it. Plotinus does little more here than state a number of assumptions that underlie some of the discussion in the following chapters. He will return to investigation and argument in ch. 25.

24, 1–3 *It will not be here, where there is nothing that can receive it in any way*: Once again, Plotinus relies on his principle that a body will receive as much of soul as it is capable of, cf. ch. 15 above: a dead body will then be one from which the soul has departed because the body has lost its capacity to receive it. Though Plotinus does not spell out the implications of his view, it would follow from it that a body whose heart had failed would not be capable of receiving the life-giving element of the soul that would require that organ for the exercise of its activity, and in the absence of which the others could not function. Similarly, Aristotle never sets out one of the implications of his view of the soul as the body's form, namely that a damaged body could not have the same form as an undamaged one.

The use of the compound verb *paramenein*, "to stay on with," preserves the position that the soul is neither in the body in the strict sense nor entirely separate from it.

24, 4 *In case that it is in an irrational state*: This qualifying clause reminds one of the souls in the *Phaedo* (81c–d)

which have become contaminated by bodies and hover around graveyards because they are pulled back—*helketai*, employing the same verb as Plotinus uses here, *helkei*—to the visible world. Though in Plotinus it is the body that might be supposed to cause the pull, this can only be exercised on a soul that is, by being literally "out of its mind," not in a good condition.

24, 5–6 *If it possesses some extraneous element*: *Ei allo ekhei* could perhaps be understood as "some other body," as Armstrong, for instance, would take it, but if so, that would seem rather to refer to some form of "pneumatic vehicle" than another material body in the normal sense, since Plotinus is discussing the soul's fate after death. This, however, must constitute an alternative to a period of disembodied existence that would be the norm for a soul after any one life here, as will become clear in the course of the ensuing discussion of memory. The soul is the subject of all the verbs in the sentence, except that of the relative clause: soul goes to a body that is prepared for it, cf. VI.7.7, 8–16, where Plotinus talks of the World Soul "making a preliminary sketch" (*prohypographê*) for the individual souls of a body to which its lower levels then fit themselves.

24, 6–8 *And since there are many possible places*: Differences resulting from place or disposition have already been

adduced in the discussion of why the professedly identical souls are in practice different, cf. 7, 20–25 above, and note there. The workings of justice—that is to say, cosmic or divine justice—are another way of looking at a further factor previously mentioned, namely what souls have done in previous lives, cf. 8, 6–9 above, with note.

24, 8–11 *For one will never escape the due retribution for unjust acts*: The inevitability of divine justice is a new point. Already implicit in the inability of persons who have lived bad lives to make good choices in the Myth of Er in *Republic* X (620a–c), it was spelled out in *Laws* X, 905a–b. In fact the rest of this chapter is full of echoes from that section of the *Laws*, which makes the places in which a soul lives dependent on its position on the scale of virtue and vice, cf. 904a–e. Plotinus will return to the theme of the inescapability of what has been established by the universal dispensation at the end of the main part of this treatise, at IV.4.45, 27–40, and, with specific reference to law, in the late treatise III.2 [47] 4, 24–28.

24, 12 *Unwittingly borne toward what is proper for him to suffer*: For being carried to one's destination even if one is unaware of it, cf. IV.4.45, 30.

24, 14 *As if greatly exhausted* (*polla kamôn*): HS in their *Index of Sources* compare Callimachus Fr. 23. 20 (from

the *Aitia*) for the notion of arriving at one's destination exhausted, but it is far from certain that Plotinus will have known Callimachus (Numenius might have done, but this reference to him is to one of his best-known dicta, which may have circulated on its own). It does, however, have a poetic ring to it (specifically as the end of a pentameter), so a literary allusion should not be excluded. A slightly less improbable alternative is the epigram that Diogenes Laertius composed in honor of Zeno of Kition at the end of his life of him (*Lives of the Philosophers* VII 31); it is at any rate notable that, after describing Zeno as *polla kamôn* by reason of old age, he makes him say that he is coming to death of his own accord (*erkhomai automatos*), which could be reflected by the phrase "as a result of his voluntary movement."

24, 15–16 *Taking on involuntary suffering as a result of his voluntary movement*: Arrival at a place where one does not wish to arrive can be said to result from voluntary movement because the soul has by then stopped resisting its inevitable fate. Cf. the contrast between the voluntary (*hekousion*) and the involuntary (*akousion*) in IV.8 [6] 5, 1–8—although there the subject is the fall of *all* souls.

24, 19 *Through the power of that harmony which controls everything*: The "harmony" (*harmonia*) mentioned here

may be usefully related back to the "harmony" (*symphônia*) of souls referred to in ch. 12, 14–26.

24, 23–26 *So if they are not anywhere in body*: Plotinus' vocabulary here suggests that the souls freed from body will be in Intellect, but we should remember that the same vocabulary is sometimes used of intelligible being as a whole, and thus includes Soul as well as Intellect, cf. especially VI.4–5 [22–23]. The use of *en tôi theôi*, "in God" (25), as the equivalent of where there is substance, being, and *the divine*, is a good illustration of the way in which Plotinus, following Greek tradition, is prepared to describe as a god anything that can be qualified by the adjective *theios*, "divine." Harder, we may note, in his translation, wished to delete this phrase, suspecting a Christian gloss, or at least one from Porphyry, but that seems unnecessary.

There is an awkwardness, but probably no significance, in the way that Plotinus slips from talking about a soul in the singular to souls in the plural. "This kind of being" is an expansion of the simple *toutôi* in 26.

We turn now, until IV.4, 17, to the subject of memory, and in particular to the fact that it is incompatible with existence at the level of the intelligible realm. This begins a very Plotinian enquiry into the presuppositions of the concept of memory, owing something to the speculations of Aristotle on the same subject, in his treatise *On*

Memory and Recollection. For good discussions of the topic of memory in Plotinus, see Blumenthal 1971, ch 7, and Warren 1965, 252–260.

Chapter 25

The exercise of memory is inappropriate to the level of intellect, but must belong to a lower level of soul.

25, 1–10 These lines introduce the topic of memory, with special reference to the possibility of its surviving death. Before that problem can be discussed, the nature of memory itself must be investigated. Two main questions are identified, whether souls that have departed from their bodies are able to remember anything, and which part or faculty of the soul is the basis of memory. The first of these questions has a number of sub-headings, listed in 2–4. Plotinus will, logically enough, deal with the second question first.

25, 8–9 *The question as to what memory is has been discussed elsewhere*: The nature of memory, which one might expect to find as a third question, and one to be tackled before the other two, has, Plotinus here tells us, been discussed

elsewhere and frequently. However, as Armstrong points out *ad loc.*, there are no earlier discussions of memory in Plotinus' published works, except for a brief one in III.6 [26] at 2, 42–49. There is hardly enough there to merit the description "much talked-about" (*pollakis tethrullêtai*); and, what is more, that passage also refers to a previous discussion. There is, of course, a succinct discussion of memory in ch. 3 of the later treatise IV.6 [41], *On Sense-Perception and Memory*, but if we are to hold with Porphyry's chronological order this cannot count. Perhaps Plotinus is referring to discussions by other philosophers, Plato and Aristotle being the obvious candidates. Igal, *ad loc.*, thinks Plotinus is referring to III.6 and perhaps to oral discussions, but that is to explain the unclear by the unknown. In either case, we should note that most of Plotinus' references to things already stated can easily be identified in the *Enneads* themselves. This is therefore anomalous.

25, 10–13 *Now if memory is of something acquired*: The point here is that, if memories are of something acquired from the outside, or something that has happened, they can only belong to things that exist in a temporal framework, since there must have been a time before the acquisition or the happening.

The manuscript reading *oute tois en khronôi engignoito*, "would not exist in beings which are in time," cannot be interpreted in any way that makes sense here, since both

this sentence and the next (down to 17) are quite plainly about the inapplicability of memory to what is impassible and *not* in time: either, then, Kirchhoff's insertion of a negative, or Igal's addition to *en khronôi* of the privative prefix *a-*, is indispensable.

25, 13–17 *One must not, for example, attribute memory to God or to Being or to Intellect*: Since "God" is contrasted here with Intellect and Being, it must in this case refer to the One: on the use of *theos* to refer both to the One and to Intellect, cf. note on 1, 14–15 above. Hence the denial of time to all of them, but the ascription of eternity to Being and not to God, since the One may be thought of beyond even eternity. Plotinus' main discussion of eternity and time, the latter of which is in the first place to be associated with Soul rather than Intellect, comes in III.7 [45]. For time being a necessary concomitant of memory, which therefore cannot take place in Intellect, where there is eternity, cf. IV.4.1, 11–14 below.

In principle, "admits of no alteration" (*ou dekhomenon parallaxin*, 16–17) could, given the preceding words, exclude even "Cambridge change," where nothing changes apart from the progress of time, but there is no evidence that Plotinus held that there was such a form of change.

25, 19 *Or experiences one intellection (noêsis) after another*: Strictly, *noêsis* does not take place in time because its objects,

and therefore, by the nature of intellection, its subjects too at the time of the activity, must be outside time. So either Plotinus is indulging in a *per impossibile* argument, or it is possible that he is using *noêsis* to refer to thinking other than purely intuitive—and thus instantaneous—intellection, and so to discursive reasoning that is linked to time: such use of at least the noun *nous* and the verb *noein* are common enough. But while time is inapplicable to any one act of intellection, the occasions on which we "use" our intellect by switching on to it may properly be said to succeed one another.

25, 20–22 *But what prevents it from knowing the changes in other things . . . ?*: Another possibility: that while what is not subject to change cannot remember anything about itself, for the reasons explained above, it might be able to have memories of other things that do change. The revolutions of the cosmos would fall under this heading because there is change in so far as the bodies in the cosmos move, even though neither they severally nor the cosmos as a whole change. If that is so, it will think of things in succession, and that will bring this thinking into the province of memory. For a more extensive discussion of these matters, see IV.4, 6–17 below.

The point that memory is not the same as thinking looks forward to the discussion, beginning at line 34, of which part or faculty of the soul is responsible for memory.

We may recall Aristotle's care to distinguish imagination from sense-perception on the one hand and thinking on the other in *On the Soul* III 3. Perhaps Plotinus, knowing that he will conclude that memory is based on imagination, has that in mind here in what follows.

25, 25–27 *And one must not say that it remembers its own intellections*: Acts of intellection do not, as such, come and go, because intellection is always in progress, even if only intermittently accessible to some subjects, i.e. human beings: only if intellection were capable of "going away" would it make sense for a subject to be afraid that it might go, and so wish to retain it in memory.

25, 27–31 *Nor should we say that the soul remembers*: "Soul" here means soul below the level of intellect, and so in the first place the reasoning and discursive faculty: if that remembers, it will not do so in the way that the mind "remembers" what is inherent in it because that, or rather the contact analogous to memory, is the mode of "remembering" applicable to the intuitive intellect alone. The things inherent in the nature of soul (*symphyta*) are, as Theiler points out *ad loc.*, the Forms, or rather the *logoi* of Forms, in so far as they are Being and components of it, but they are also, *qua* components of Intellect, intellects and thoughts. It is in the accessing of these that Plotinus would seem to hold that *anamnêsis* really consists, rather

than in any antenatal "viewing" of the Forms (though he would not exclude the latter).

25, 31–33 *It is possible for it to possess them while not being active in respect of them*: To have intellect—and therefore its contents—while not exercising the activity that pertains to them, is characteristic of the human soul, as Plotinus sees it. The intermittent activity of, or in accordance with, intellect was one of the consequences of Plotinus' doctrine of the undescended intellect that was unacceptable to later Platonists such as Iamblichus and Proclus, cf. e.g. Iamblichus, *Commentary on the Timaeus*, Fr. 87 Dillon, and Proclus *Elements of Theology*, prop. 211. This condition is not so much particularly one of the embodied soul: it is exclusive to it, since there is no obstacle to a disembodied soul exercising continual intellection. On the nature of the obstacle for the embodied soul, cf. 30, 7–10 below, with I.4.10, 6–19, and Blumenthal 1971, 88–89.

Plotinus claims that the access to our ongoing intellection is what "the ancients" (viz., Plato) meant by recollection (*anamnêsis*). From another point of view, the undescended intellect replaced recollection. Plotinus points out that his doctrine showed that the notion of *anamnêsis*, among others, was right, cf. V.9 [5] 5, 29–32, and for further discussion, Blumenthal, *op. cit*., 96–97.

25, 34–37 *But perhaps we are being careless about this question*: The next step in the discussion is to introduce the possibility that memory does not belong to the upper, rational soul, as the consideration of memory of thoughts and things pertaining to the heavenly bodies has so far suggested. This upper soul is what is meant by "that" soul, which Plotinus will shortly describe as the "more divine" soul, cf. 23, 2 above, where it is again opposed to "the other soul." The mention of "recollection and memory" (37) may embody a glancing reference to Aristotle's treatise of that name (sc. *On Memory and Recollection*), which no doubt constitutes a backdrop for many of Plotinus' speculations here.

This "other soul" is that consisting of the faculties between the vegetative and the rational, i.e. sense-perception, appetition, and imagination. It is described as *obscurer* (*amydrotera*) because one of the ways in which Plotinus thinks of the soul's presence in what is below it is that it illuminates the lower being: the further away from the source, i.e. the lower down the scale of soul, a particular level is, the fainter the light. For this use of *amydros*, "dim" or "obscure," cf. e.g. II.4.10, 28–31. The compound of body and soul (*synamphoteron*), when used in a technical sense and not simply meaning body plus soul, is the lowest part of the individual, consisting of body—or matter and *phusis*, cf. note on 6, 13–15 above—and the faculties of the vegetative soul. For the terms and distinctions involved, see the notes on IV.4.18 below.

25, 38–39 *If it belongs to another type of soul*: The two questions, when does memory start, and how does it happen, need to be asked in the case of both the new candidates for being its basis. "Living being" (*zôion*) is now used as shorthand for the compound that is the living being, as often elsewhere, cf. esp. I.1 *passim*. Plotinus may well have in mind here Aristotle, *On the Soul* II 4. 408b15–18, where memory is attributed to the compound.

25, 39–45 *We must investigate, then*: The questions just raised bring Plotinus back to the second of the questions raised in the introduction to this section, lines 1–10, namely what it is that remembers, and various other more precise questions that need to be answered in the course of answering the main one. The question whether memory is to be seen as separate from thinking and sense-perception (cf., again, imagination in Aristotle's *On the Soul* III 3) is now approached from a different angle, namely whether it is the same part or faculty of soul that becomes aware of perceptions and thoughts. There is no real distinction between "faculty" (*dynamis*) and "part" (*meros*), since Plotinus repeatedly makes it clear that "part" in the strict sense is not applicable to soul: he apparently continues to use the word because it is common usage and also, sometimes, convenient, as it is in English.

Chapter 26

The consequences of the hypothesis that memory is a function of the compound of body and soul are here examined, leading to the rejection of the hypothesis.

26, 1–14 Plotinus now addresses the implications of sense-perception belonging to the body-soul compound (*to synamphoteron*). The comparison with drilling or weaving recalls Aristotle's with weaving and building at *On the Soul* I 4, 408b11–13, but, unlike Aristotle, *ibid.* 13–15, Plotinus does not go on to say that the subject is the person doing something *by means of the soul*. He also differs from Aristotle in describing the body's contribution as that of a tool. Here Plotinus makes a move that became standard in subsequent Platonist readings of *On the Soul*, which characteristically took the word *organikon*, "equipped with organs," in Aristotle's definition of the soul as meaning "like a tool (or instrument)"—the word *organon* meaning both a tool and a bodily organ. In so far as they admitted the concept of entelechy to their discussions, they interpreted it to mean that there was one level of the soul that informed the body and another that used it as its instrument, cf. e.g. Pseudo-Simplicius, *Commentary on Aristotle On the Soul* 90, 29–91, 4.

26, 6–9 *Since the body undergoes affections*: Plotinus distinguishes three types of stimulus that the sensitive soul may receive in sense-perception, (a) an impression arising from the body, (b) one that comes through the body (from the external world), and (c) a judgment (*krisis*) that it has itself made as a result of something experienced by the body. The Greek does not make it very clear how the first and second of these differ, but the distinction may be viewed as that, say, between the sensing of a pain in the toe and the sensation of a brick falling on the toe; while the distinction between the first two and the third might be seen as that between the raw sensation of the brick, and the judgment that *it is a brick*—or, to turn to the sense of smell, the raw sensation of a pleasant odor, and the judgment that *it is a rose*. In either case the sense-organ is to be seen as responsible for mediating information from the external world. Plotinus returns to this topic in rather more detail below, at IV.4.23, 20–32.

While Plotinus frequently uses words meaning "impression" (*typos*, *typôsis*) without qualification when he discusses the body's role in sense-perception, he will occasionally explain that they are not to be understood literally, as they were in the Stoic theory of sense-perception, another case where Plotinus has dematerialized materialist terminology. The role of "impressions" in sense-perception and memory will be discussed again, in more detail, at IV.6 [41] 1. In fact, Aristotle had already

used the word *typos* with a qualification indicating that it was not to be understood literally at *On Memory* 450a31. Sense-perception had already been presented as a judgment in the previous treatise, at III.6.1, 1–7, cf. also IV.6.2, 16–18; and see further Blumenthal 1971, 70–73.

26, 9–12 *So the perception of this may be termed a common function*: For the reasons just mentioned, sense-perception must be assigned to the body-soul compound; in other words, it is still a function of the soul that cannot work without a contribution from the body. However, since he has now shown that in sense-perception soul processes external stimuli, the management of what is now in soul requires no contribution from the body.

26, 12–14 *Unless one were to take as evidence for remembering too being common*: A possible objection: that the composition of the body may make us better or worse at remembering. We have already seen that Plotinus held that one's character could be influenced by the make-up of one's body, in spite of the professed position that the soul is *apathês*, "not subject to change or affection," cf. note on 7, 20–25 above, and references given there. That applies to an individual seen as a whole; now he raises the possibility that it might apply even to an activity that does not require the body for its operation. In IV.6, he will talk of the power of memory diminishing with old age, and, though he does not spell

this out, what changes must be the body. Consistently with this view of what happens to memory, he also notes that the senses become less acute in old age, cf. IV.6.3, 53–54, and contrast Aristotle, *On Memory* 450b5–7.

26, 16–18 *After all, how will it be the body-soul compound . . . ?*: Plotinus now passes on to memories that do not involve the physical world. The compound may be contrasted with soul because *psykhê* is used in the strict sense of that part of the soul that is above the one that forms "part" of the compound, often described as *physis* or nature: on these distinctions, cf, esp. IV.4.18 below, and notes there. The remembering of "things that are learned" (*mathêseis*) must necessarily be a purely psychic activity.

26, 18–24 *Now if the compound living being is such in the sense of being something different*: Two comments on the assumption that the compound is some third entity over and above body and soul. In the first place, the assumption is absurd, since the living being—*zôion*, often used interchangeably with *koinon* or *synamphoteron*, "the compound"—is neither the result of a change in its two components nor a mixture of them, cf. IV.7.2, 18–25: the latter would involve the disappearance of soul as such. Secondly, it would still be the case that it is the soul that remembers, because the situation would be analogous to what happens if wine and

honey are mixed: the sweetness of the mixture is attributable to one of the original ingredients, namely the honey.

As is acutely pointed out by King [2009] 149, the comparison is somewhat flawed, in that the sweetness of honey is proper to it when it is on its own, but memory is really only a property of soul when it is involved with a body (even an astral one); however, the analogy is good enough for Plotinus' purposes here.

26, 25–34 *What then if the soul itself were to do the remembering . . . ?*: A further possible objection to the hypothesis that it is soul on its own that remembers, namely that by its presence in body it is somehow marked by impressions of sense-objects. The first argument against this is that the impressions are not material ones: there is no actual pressure on a medium, but what happens is something like an act of thinking—where the notion is inapplicable—even in the case of sensible objects. What lies behind this is probably Plotinus' view that the final stage of perception works on a kind of translation of the original input into "something like thoughts," cf. IV.7.6, 22–24.

26, 28 *And not have them*, *so to say*, *flow past it*: It is not clear whether it is soul that is the subject of *pararrhein*, "flow past" (so Igal, *ad loc.* and HS^2) or the sense-objects; but flowing is more appropriate to physical objects than to immaterial soul, and we have translated accordingly.

26, 30 *Nor are they like sealings*: The terminology here, *ensphragiseis*, *antereiseis*, *typôseis*, is distinctly and deliberately Stoic, cf. *SVF* I 484; II 343, though it can also be traced back to the language used at *Theaetetus* 191b–d.

26, 33–34 *And what need is there of a body . . . ?*: This question represents a second argument, which we may take as being: if these "impressions" are not material ones, then there is no need to postulate anything bodily to receive them.

26, 34–42 *But, one might claim*: The answer to the objector's point, in two parts. The first, at 37, might be seen as a debating point: how could the body make any comment on things that did not penetrate to it? What follows is the serious argument that it is possible to remember things of which the body takes no cognizance: there must be things that pertain to the soul alone if it has any function that is its own, on which cf. IV.8.3, 21–25. This argument could not, of course, be used for a hypothetical remembering by body of things that are its own, for body without soul is literally nothing, or at least devoid of any quality, being matter; for these characteristics of matter, cf. I.8.10.

26, 42–56 The rest of the chapter is expansion and extension of this point, emphasizing that the body, not least because of its unstable nature, can only be an impediment

to memory, which requires stability (*monê*), cf. 52–54. Plotinus nevertheless reminds us that there are activities whose functioning entails the use of bodily organs—or instruments, cf. 46–50.

26, 44–46 *For if this is not the case*: The soul's stability, as opposed to the body's proclivity to flux, is also a prerequisite, according to Plotinus, for the three forms of awareness or consciousness mentioned in these lines (*synaisthêsis*, *parakolouthêsis*, *synthesis/synesis*). Why that should be is not explained, but it appears that here at least Plotinus thinks that the results of an activity must be firmly lodged in the soul, which, as we shall see, means the faculty or faculties of imagination. That raises a problem, because *synaisthêsis*, literally "a perceiving along with," or "co-perceiving," suggests simultaneity, and seems to be contrasted with *parakolouthêsis*, "a following along with," which must then be envisaged as happening subsequently to the original cognitive stimulus, while *synaisthêsis* is simultaneous with it. The third term, *synthesis*, "combination," explained as a kind of understanding, would then indicate a further process, putting together data from various kinds of cognition. The main point is, though, that all these psychic processes require a measure of stability. Good discussion in King [2009], 153–154.

26, 53 *And since memory involves stability*: Plotinus may have in mind here the "etymology," in Plato, *Cratylus* 437b3, of *mnêmê* from *monê*, "stability," an etymology perhaps being alluded to at Aristotle, *On the Soul*, II 4, 408b18.

Body, which is mobile and subject to flux: The text here has *tên tou sômatos physin*, "the nature of body," which we choose to translate simply as "body": Plotinus does on occasion use *physis tou X*, "the nature of X," as the equivalent of X.

26, 55 *So the "river of Lêthê" should be understood in this sense*: *Lêthê* means "forgetfulness": the souls in the Myth of Er, in *Republic* X (621a–c), on their way from the choice of lives to reincarnation, must drink from the waters of the river so named—first called *Amelês*, another word for forgetfulness or neglect (621a6, the plain through which the river flows initially being called *Lêthê*, 621a3). Plotinus here interprets "drinking from the river of Lethe" as symbolizing the actual process of rebirth, vividly portrayed by Plato in *Timaeus* 43a–c, where indeed the body is presented as a "river."

26, 56 *Let this condition, then, belong to the soul*: The use of *pathêma* by Plotinus here (which we have rendered "condition"; Armstrong "experience"; MacKenna "fact"; Brisson "affection") is slightly odd, given that he holds soul proper to be impassible, but we may suppose that he is using the term loosely. It occurs again in a similar sense,

we may note, at the end of the first chapter of III.5.1, 65: "And such are the conditions of the soul" (*kai tauta men tês psykhês ta pathêmata*).

Warren ([1965]: 259), we may note, takes the *pathêma* of the soul to be, not memory, but forgetfulness. This is not impossible, but it surely goes against the flow of the argument, since the beginning of the next chapter picks up on this final remark, taking it as referring to memory.

Chapter 27

Memory belongs properly to the soul.

27, 1–25 Memory, then, belongs to the soul, but to which soul? Plotinus here, in raising the question, makes a distinction, as frequently elsewhere, not between the rational and irrational "parts" of the soul of more traditional Platonism, but rather between the (descended) rational soul, which is for him is the soul "proper," and seat of the personality, the "we" (*hêmeis*), and the irrational, "vegetative" soul deriving directly from the lower aspect of the World Soul, or Nature. His answer is that in fact both of these might be deemed to possess a faculty of memory.

27, 1–14 *But which soul . . . ?*: The theory of the two levels of immanent soul is here set out, the "more divine" (*theiotera*), which for Plotinus is the seat of consciousness and selfhood, which takes cognizance intellectually of what is below it, and the lower soul, seat of sense-perceptions and passions, which he sees as coming to us from Nature (*physis*), the lower stratum of the World Soul, but coalescing with our souls at their lower interface. Each of these, he wishes to maintain, is endowed with a faculty of imagination and memory, and this duality Plotinus wishes to dramatize by allegorizing the famous passage of Homer, *Odyssey* XI 601–604, where Odysseus, on his visit to Hades, is confronted by Heracles, and the poet, conscious that tradition also places Heracles among the gods on Olympus, is moved to make a distinction:

"his shade, that is, but *he himself* among the immortal gods / enjoys their festivals, married to sweet-stepping Hebe, / child of great Zeus and Hera of the golden sandals."

The shade (*eidôlon*) of Heracles stands for the lower soul, or *aisthêtikon*, which remembers all the details of our mortal existence, while the memory possessed by the higher soul, represented by Heracles himself (*autos*), has a much more problematical relationship to the details of any given human embodiment, such as will be explored in what follows. See further on this Pépin [1969]. The distinction between the shade of Heracles and Heracles himself is utilized also (implicitly) in the earlier tractate

VI.4 [22] 16, 37ff., and (explicitly) in the late tractate I.1 [53] 12, 24ff.

Another passage where this distinction between the levels of soul is well brought out is VI.7 [38] 5, esp. 21ff.: "But the man over this one (sc. the growth-soul, *hê phytikê*) belongs to a soul already more divine (*theiotera*) which has a better man and clearer senses; and this would be the man Plato was defining (sc. in *Alcibiades* I 129e–130a), and by adding "using a body" he indicated that it rides upon (*epokheitai*) the one which primarily uses a body, and the one which does so secondarily is diviner." This is indeed Plotinus' basic distinction, rather than the more traditional Platonic tripartite soul.

27, 14–25 *What then would that other soul say . . . ?*: As it turns out, the degree to which the higher soul retains memories of its mortal existence depends on its level of purification on death. The soul, first of all, which "drags something with it" is still initially suffused with memories of its immediately past life. But what, one might ask, can it be dragging with it? Back in Plato's *Phaedo*, 81b–d, there is talk of body-loving souls after death being polluted and weighed down as if by material elements, but this will not do for Plotinus; such qualities for him cannot be bodily—however Plato envisaged them—but must attach rather to the pneumatic vehicle (*okhêma*), an entity the existence of which, at least in the case of the embodied soul, he is

chary of admitting. There does seem to be a reference to something of the sort in the tractate immediately preceding this in Porphyry's list, III.6 [26] 5, 25–29, where Plotinus speaks as follows about what the "separation" (*to khôrizein*) of the soul from bodily affections might betoken:

"But separating it could also mean taking away the things from which it is separated when it is not poised over a *pneuma* turbid (*tholeron*) from gluttony and sated with impure meats, but that in which it resides is so fine (*iskhnon*) that it can ride (*okheisthai*) on it in peace."

—where the *pneuma* referred to as being "ridden upon" is more or less necessarily the pneumatic vehicle; but otherwise Plotinus will only recognize the existence of the vehicle in relation to disembodied souls, as in chs. 9, 15, and 17 above (see notes *ad loc.*), and here. At any rate, with the progressive purification of this entity, memories of the life just lived largely melt away, and other select memories from previous lives will supervene. Plotinus, most interestingly, seems to envisage here a mode of memory in which the disembodied soul will retain just enough in the way of memory from its succession of lives to individualize it. The precise nature of these memories is left somewhat obscure, but it will certainly exclude the trivial and the sensual. This topic will be pursued in the following chapters, but first Plotinus wishes to address the subject of the precise faculty of the soul that possesses memory.

27, 20–21 *Even some things which it did not hold in its memory here*: This phrase presumably refers to such things as direct vision of the Forms, which it could only access partially during its bodily existence through *anamnêsis*. A similar explanation will also cover the phrase "the things of its external life (*tou exô biou*)" just below.

27, 23–25 *But what will the soul remember when it has come to be on its own?*: These last lines could just as well have been attached to the beginning of the next chapter. We must always remember that the division into chapters is not the work of Plotinus himself, but of Marsilio Ficino.

Chapter 28

First possibility: each faculty possesses the memories appropriate to it.

28, 1–21 The problem that he raises in this short chapter is whether memories are exclusively generated by the sense-perceptive faculty, or whether the passionate faculties of the soul, the desiderative (*epithymêtikon*) and the spirited (*thymoeides*), generate their own memories of previous objects of desire or occasions of annoyance. Plotinus' position on this question is of considerable interest, as constituting

an instance of his abiding interest in the subconscious. Here he employs the lively image of the shepherd actually perceiving a wolf approaching his fold, and his sheepdog starting up instinctively, in the face of his master's anxiety, and reacting to the smell and the general disturbance, before it has seen the wolf. The sheepdog represents the unreflective quality of the reactions of the lower faculties of the soul, which require the faculties of *aisthêsis*, and then *phantasia*, to generate a perception, on the basis of which there may be produced a memory.

Taking on board an objection (ll. 3–4), to the effect that it is surely the faculty that feels the desire or the anger that should contain the memory of those emotions, he is prepared to recognize the phenomenon of unconscious memory, where the *epithymêtikon*, for example, has stored away a "trace" (*ikhnos*,17) of the event occasioning the passion, in the form, not of a conscious memory as such, but rather of a disposition or affection (*diathesis ê pathos*). In any case, as he points out, it is inevitably the *aisthêsis*, like the shepherd, who first sees or otherwise cognizes the object, and the desire or anger follows on this.

To take a specific example, it is the sight that first takes note, let us say, of the label of a particularly good bottle of Bordeaux wine, which leads it to remember a very pleasant previous encounter with it, and it is this that stirs the *epithymêtikon* into action, so that it *seems* that the memory resides in the desiderative faculty—whereas the desiderative

faculty is rather in the position of the sheepdog; it is swept up in the enthusiasm generated by the faculty of sight.

A final, clinching, point (19–21) is that, in certain cases, the memory of something that was very pleasant at the time turns out itself not to be pleasant, whereas if the memory reposed in the *epithymêtikon*, which is not a reflective faculty, it could only mirror the original sensation. One might add a similar case for the *thymos*: one can perfectly well summon up, or be confronted with, the memory of an event or person that annoyed one very much at the time, without on this occasion feeling any passion at all, whereas the *thymos*, if the memory reposed in it, could only recreate the original experience of anger—which is not, of course, to deny that a memory may perfectly well re-ignite the original anger; the significant point is that it does not necessarily do so.

On all these issues, see the useful discussion of Warren [1965].

28, 9 *By virtue of the element predominant in it*: The formula "by virtue of the predominant element" (*kata to epikratoun*) has a long history, going back to Anaxagoras, on the evidence of Aristotle, *Physics* I 4, 187b1–3.

28, 12 *Without being conscious of it*: The rare adverb *aparakolouthêtôs*, here translated "without being conscious of it," and found only here in Plotinus (it occurs elsewhere

in Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* II 16, 1; V 6, 5), may be related back to the use of *parakolouthêsis* in ch. 26, 45 above, on which see note *ad loc.*

Chapter 29

Memory cannot be located exclusively within the sense-perceptive faculty, as that would leave no possibility of memory for the disembodied soul. It is better to locate memory in the faculty of imagination.

29, 1–13 *Shall we then shift memory, and transfer it to the sense-perceptive faculty . . . ?*: This recalls us to the official pretext for the enquiry into memory (which has in fact developed its own momentum), the question of what degree of memory can be attributed to the soul after death. It will not therefore be sufficient for Plotinus' purposes to situate memory exclusively in the sense-perceptive faculty; this would fail to account for the fact that we have memory also of items not deriving from sense-perception, such as scientific theorems (*mathêmata*) and other abstract thoughts (*dianoêmata*). This leads him to a significant conclusion, though one that did not commend itself to his successors, that there must in fact be *two* faculties of imagination

(*phantasia*), since a single faculty could not handle two such different types of data.

29, 3 *But if the shade also is to have memory*: "The shade" (*eidôlon*) embodies a reference back to the shade of Heracles in 27, 7ff. This actually points up a slight anomaly in the image that Plotinus is employing, since of course the "shade" is dead—that is to say, separated from its body—but still recognizes Odysseus and remembers all its adventures. However, it serves well enough to make the contrast with the higher soul.

29, 11–13 *But if it is divided in two*: The argument here is somewhat obscure, but seems intended as a *reductio ad absurdum*: if we postulate that both sense-perception and intellect can cognize (that is, receive *phantasmata* of) and store both sensible and perceptible objects—which is what those who try to argue for a single faculty of imagination, receptive of both types of object, will have to assume—then we will end up with not one, nor two, but *four* faculties of imagination and memory. Therefore, the postulation of just two is the more economical alternative.

29, 13–19 *But in general what necessity is there . . . ?*: A further argument for distinguishing between the faculties (*dynameis*) of sense-perception and memory: Plotinus observes that there is often a considerable discrepancy

between the capacity for original thought and quickness of uptake—and likewise acuteness of perception—and excellence of memory, which suggests that we do not perform these functions with the same faculty. This point, we may note, is made by Aristotle near the beginning of his *De Memoria* (449b4–9). In general, we may assume that Plotinus has Aristotle's short treatise in mind here.

29, 19–36 *But again, if each of the two has to be different*: Plotinus now turns to address a problem arising from his last point, but which has also arisen before (28, 7ff): will the faculty of memory itself require a means of perception of those items which it is to remember? The solution is to postulate that the original sense-perception (*aisthêma*), on being conveyed to the imaginative faculty, becomes an item in that faculty (a *phantasma*), and, as such, an object of memory—the strength of the memory in general depending on the length and intensity of the original sensation.

29, 27–28 *Even if it is present to it for just a short time*: One might pause a moment to consider what Plotinus really means by *ep' oligon* and *oligê*, here translated as "for a short time" and "brief." He may, of course, mean simply "of brief duration," but he might mean also "slight," in the sense of an indistinctly perceived object. Brevity of perception alone, one would think, would not necessarily result in a weak *phantasma* or memory-item, if the sense-datum were

clear and distinct, and/or of great interest to the perceiver. It is possible that Plotinus is simply equating length of perception with vividness of memory, but we think that he may intend something broader. Memory is, after all, for Plotinus, a "power" (*dynamis*), not any sort of quasi-material, Stoic-style, imprint (*typos*), so that it is rather a question of the quality of the *dynamis*, or of the degree of attention (*prosexis*), that the subject is able to bring to bear, as well as—Plotinus admits—of inherent bodily temperaments (lit. "mixtures," *kraseis*), which may assist, or militate against, the subject's ability to focus his attention.

29, 34 *Or because they pay attention or do not*: The word *prosexis*, for attention, here used in the plural, is a rare alternative to the more normal *prosokhê*, as a noun from *prosekhein*. It is used however, by Plato, at *Republic* III 407c, and, perhaps more relevantly, in the Platonic *Definitions* (413d), where it is defined as "a fine-tuning (*syntonia*) of the soul for the purpose of acquiring knowledge (*pros to katamathein*)." This is its only occurrence in Plotinus.

29, 36 *On another occasion*: This could be construed as a reference to such a passage as IV.6 [41] 3, where Plotinus takes up again the question of the nature of memory, and reiterates the position that it is a "power" (*dynamis*), rather than any kind of impression (*typôsis*); but we need

not assume that Plotinus had anything definite in mind when he penned this.

Chapter 30

The role of the imagination in remembering thoughts.

30, 1–16 Plotinus now turns to the question of the means by which the faculty of imagination enables memory of thought-processes (*dianoêseis*). This, as it turns out, is more or less a mirror-image of how it relates to sense-perception. Even as, in the case of sense-perception, memory involves the given sense-datum being assumed *upward*, so to speak, into the imagination, so in the case of thought-processes, we must postulate their unfolding *downward*.

In this connection, Plotinus first makes appeal to an Aristotelian principle, enunciated both in *On the Soul* (III 7, 431a17ff.) and *On Memory* (449b31), that "the soul never thinks without a mental image (*phantasma*)," which he does not in fact maintain himself, and therefore qualifies with the remark (5): "if not, we must look to some other solution." However, for his present purpose, the Aristotelian formulation will do well enough, since it can be supplemented with his theory of the *logos* that emanates,

as a "discursive sequel" (to borrow the formulation of Blumenthal [1971], 88), from the *dianoia*, or discursive reason, into the *phantasia*. What we have to imagine is a process of "unpacking" or "unfolding" (*anaptyxis*, 8) of the thought, which is itself "partless" (*ameres*), into a form that can be duly recorded by the *phantasia*, and so committed to memory. It is only to this extent that the Aristotelian formulation has validity. This is a rather specialized use of *logos*, which in general signifies the projection of a higher hypostasis onto a lower; we may compare an enlightening instance of this at V.1 [10] 3, 7–8, where Plotinus makes use of the Stoic distinction between *logos endiathetos*, "the conceived proposition" and *logos prophorikos*, "the uttered proposition," to portray the relation between Soul and Intellect above it: Soul "utters" as *logoi* the Forms lying hidden in Intellect. Here the comparison of a mirror (10) is helpful, as symbolizing the "distension" and "visibility" of the thought to the imagination. At this point, Plotinus is concerned to remind us that thought (*noêsis*) is always active at the highest level of the soul, but its apprehension (*antilêpsis*) is intermittent, as the *phantasia* has also to attend to data coming to it from "below," from the *aisthêtikon*.

30, 4 *Which is like a representation of the thought*: The term *dianoêma*, translated here simply as "thought," is in fact almost unique in Plotinus, occurring only here and above at 29, 7 (in the plural). It describes an individual item of

thought at the level of *dianoia*, as opposed to a *noêma*, occurring at the level of *nous*.

30, 10 *Exhibits the thought as if in a mirror*: For another significant use of mirror imagery by Plotinus, cf. I.4 [46] 10, 6–19, where he is also concerned to explain why we are not always conscious of our thinking.

Chapter 31

The consequence of assigning memory to the faculty of imagination is that we must postulate not one, but two such faculties.

31, 1–20 The direction of the argument in this chapter is clear enough, but there are a number of points where a degree of concision unusual even for Plotinus makes it necessary to decide between more than one possible view of what exactly he is saying. What is developed here, most interestingly, is a theory of two faculties of imagination, a higher and a lower. That each soul remembers was stated at 27, 3 above. This proposition is taken as the basis for further discussion in that chapter, but neither there nor in the intervening chapters has it been argued for (though

it is mentioned again at 29, 12), and it is only in the next chapter that the reasons for it appear clearly.

31, 3 *They each have one*: By placing the accent on the third rather the second syllable of *hekatera*, an awkward singular with a plural verb of which it then becomes subject rather than object, editors from Kirchhoff to Brêhier give a slightly different sense to these words, viz. "let each soul have <an imaginative faculty>." The received text puts the stress on the idea that there are two faculties of imagination, distributed one to each of the two sections of the soul, and this seems better.

31, 4 *In which of them do the memories happen?*: The question *tini autôn enginetai*, means "in which of the two faculties is memory found?" It could also be read to mean "in which of the souls are the imaginative faculties found?" but the former alternative seems preferable.

31, 4–5 *In both*: That is, in both faculties of imagination. The argument is that, since memories of sensible and intelligible objects cannot be located separately in the two faculties, one in each, there will be two sets of images in each of the two faculties. To change the text from the neuter *amphoterois*, referring to the faculties, to the feminine *amphoterais*, referring to souls, as do most editors, from Kirchhoff to Brêhier, undoes the argument.

31, 6–8 *For it would not be the case*: There is some rhetorical exaggeration here: while there could be a living being without reason and intellect—any non-human animal—there can be none without the vegetative and sensitive faculties. Given Plotinus' view that even the irrational soul survives death, cf. esp. III.4.2, 11–30, such an entity could not even be a discarnate soul. In writing as he does, Plotinus is perhaps already thinking in terms of the notion that character is influenced by memory, which he will discuss in IV.4.4 below.

31, 8 *If, then, both souls have such a faculty*: There are three candidates for the unexpressed noun—memory, the faculty of imagination, or an image. The last is probably correct, since in line 11 it is the image (*phantasma*) that is said to be single when the two faculties are together. They are, of course, together during an incarnation, when the individual has both upper and lower soul.

31, 11–13 *As if a shadow were following the other*: Of the two illustrations, that of one light in the field of another seems far more appropriate than the other, since a shadow does not merge with the person or object that casts it.

31, 13–15 *The other one manifests itself on its own account*: This must refer to the image in the lower soul (cf. 11): when

it shows, then we are not aware, as we would otherwise be, that it is "in" the other faculty. For the use of "in" to describe the position of a lower entity in a higher one, cf. 22, 7–11, and the note there.

31, 16–20 Plotinus now moves on to the question of just what each part of the soul remembers: these sentences form a transition to ch. 32, in which they might better be placed. It is worth noting that the selection of what to remember is based on axiological rather than psychological considerations, since all memories, in so far as they are images, are equally capable of being retained.

31, 16 *The one of them*:—The Greek is *hê hetera*, "one of two," used in line 13 to refer to the image in the lower soul—refers to the higher soul. For the picture of a higher entity "riding on" (*epokheisthai*) a lower one, cf. IV.1.1, 21 (intelligible on sensible being), II.5.5, 10 (form on matter), and in this treatise, 7, 17 (the World Soul on the cosmos).

31, 17 *When it has gone out of the body*: Plotinus uses the same word (*exelthousa*) at the beginning of the whole discussion of memory, at the start of ch. 24. Up to this moment, the higher faculty will have been aware of all the content of the lower and able to remember it, since what is there is in the form of images that it can handle. Plotinus seems to assume that the lower soul does not have reciprocal access to the

contents of the higher. The idea that a higher entity has power extending over that of a lower one was to become a formal structural principle by the time of Proclus, cf. e.g. *Elements of Theology* 56–57.

Chapter 32

What the soul remembers at and shortly after its departure from the body.

32, 1–27 This follows the observations at the end of the previous chapter. Plotinus now asks whether the memory of the higher soul might retain memories of those things that are not discreditable. He suggests that the answer lies in the fact that even these may involve a degree of affection (in the technical sense: *pathos*) and that that is retained in the lower soul, while the upper soul's memory remembers the same things without affection. This is the key to Plotinus' duplication of a faculty: things that necessarily involve affection or emotion are the province of the lower soul, yet he wishes the higher soul to retain memories of some of these. Since the constant aim, if not the constant achievement, of his psychology is to preserve the soul from the affections that its coexistence with the

body might bring, it is consistent with that aim to seek a way in which the higher soul could remember things to do with the sensible world without the risks to its *apatheia*, "freedom from affection," that these bring with them. That, as he sees it, can only be done by having the second memory, and therefore a second faculty of imagination, whose existence preserves the upper soul from the influences of the activities of the lower, without thereby denying memory to it altogether.

32, 2 *A man of moral worth*: The precise rendering of *asteios* here presents some difficulty. It can normally be translated "cultivated" or "urbane," but in the context Plotinus must mean something not far removed from *spoudaios*, the Stoic term for the "good" man, which he tends to prefer. Armstrong translates "man of quality"; we have chosen to render it "man of moral worth," despite the slight clumsiness of that.

32, 3 *While the man of moral worth*:—Literally "the other man" (*ho de*). This represents the other, higher faculty of imagination: there is no need to emend to *to de*, which would refer to it directly. Theiler *ad loc.*, is of the opinion that the *to men*, the subject of the first part of this sentence, refers to an undivided imaginative faculty, which is unlikely, since the whole passage is about the different objects and modes of memory of the upper and lower soul.

32, 9–10 *But that one*: Sc. the upper soul.

32, 16 "*Standing apart from human concerns*": A quotation from *Phaedrus*, 249c8–d1—where, however, the participle is masculine and refers to a man: Plotinus has here turned it into a neuter, to refer to a faculty. It shows, however, that this whole passage of the *Phaedrus* is very much in his mind in this connection.

32, 19–20 *For it flees from multiplicity*: The reduction in memories as soul departs further from the multiplicity of the sensible world should be seen in the light of the connection between greater simplicity and higher rank in the ontological order.

32, 21 *But travels light*: Light (*elaphra*) because no longer burdened by the accretions of the sensible world. As King suggests ([2009], n. 810), this may be an allusion to the winged soul of *Phaedrus* 246c1, as Plotinus has the *Phaedrus* in mind here.

32, 24–4.1, 1 *For example, the Heracles we spoke of above*: We return to the two Heracles figures. The "Heracles we spoke of above," lit. "that Heracles," is the shade or image of 27, 7–10 which, we are told there, remembered the deeds of his earthly life. The "holier place" may be a quotation of an apparently ancient reading at *Laws* X 905b1, *hagiôteron*

topon (though such a reading would make little sense in the context!), or a—perhaps deliberately—inaccurate reminiscence of the usual reading *agriôteron*, "more terrible." The *Laws* passage is also about Hades.

This sentence, arbitrarily broken in two by Porphyry when he divided the treatise, is not, as some claim, anacolouthic: Heracles remains the subject throughout. But the break is more abrupt than that between the parts of another arbitrarily divided treatise, III.2 and III.3, where the latter begins answering questions raised in the former.

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Commentary on Ennead *IV.4*

Chapter 1

What the soul can be deemed to remember in the intelligible world, or whether memory is appropriate to that plane of existence at all.

1, 1–16 Plotinus now turns to the question of whether the concept of memory is appropriate at all to entities existing in the realm of Intellect—including the highest, "undescended" part of the individual soul—transcending as that realm does temporal succession or spatial distinction. This reminds us that the enquiry into the nature of memory is after all subordinated to that into the mode of existence of the soul after death, with special reference to the problem

of personal identity. His conclusion as regards the intelligible world is that there is no place for memory there, as there is no occasion to break off a thought, and thus *remember* that you had it, or to interrupt contemplation in any way. There is no *discursivity* there. For further analysis of the nature of contemplation, see III.8 [30]. The point that a concept of *pastness* is essential to the occurrence of memory is made by Aristotle at *On Memory* 1. 449b15ff.

1, 1 *And in general of what things will the soul retain memory*: It is not clear whether the soul here is Heracles' soul, or any individual soul, but the rest of the discussion, which seems to have forgotten Heracles, suggests the latter.

1, 4 *Otherwise it would not be there*: The point here is that presence among the intelligibles in general, and in Intellect in particular, entails behavior appropriate to these levels. It is not possible to be in Intellect and not be an intelligence engaged in intellection. That is why, in what follows (4–11), even the best kind of memory is denied to the soul in Intellect. This might at first sight seem inconsistent with the idea that the soul's higher *phantasia* should retain some memories after the soul's departure from the body. The two views might be reconciled by thinking in terms of a process whereby the soul after death progressively rids itself of the relics of life within a body (cf. 3.27, 3–4

above), and spends some time at the level of Soul before rising to Intellect.

1, 9 *Which has experienced a change*: That is, when intuitive thought and contemplation have become discursive thinking.

1, 11–14 *If, further . . . every act of intellection is timeless*: The point that memory is inapplicable to intellect because memory requires time, while intellect is eternal, has already been made at 3.25, 13–17 above.

1, 15–16 *For there is no discursivity*: Discursivity (*diexodos*, lit. "going through"), and passing from one thing to another (*metabasis*), are Plotinus' standard characterizations of the procedures of soul and discursive thinking, as opposed to the immediate apprehension that is peculiar to intellect, cf. III.7.13, 30–44; VI.2.21, 27–32; and VI.6.4, 11–17.

1, 16–38 He now proceeds to raise a number of difficulties arising from this postulation of non-discursivity. It is indeed a problem how we can envisage a soul, even in its highest aspect, remaining a soul in a situation of complete simultaneity and compresence. It is to assist with comprehending this that he introduces the concept of succession, not temporally, but "in arrangement" (*taxei*, 29ff.), a

concept borrowed ultimately from Aristotle, *Metaphysics* V 11, 1018b26–29.

1, 16–19. *Division from above and below:* This is Plato's division and collection, as described in the *Phaedrus*, 265d1–266b1. That text, of course, is not about division, so Plotinus must have been able to assume familiarity with the method, which was referred to explicitly as "Plato's division," *hê diairesis hê Platônos*, and briefly described in the earlier treatise *On Dialectic*, I.3 [20] 4, 12–16. But while in Plato it is the work of intellect because it deals with Forms, for Plotinus it is inappropriate to intellect because, as he explains, intellect deals with all reality simultaneously and without division (in the non-technical sense): this is another reason why there can be no memory at that level. While a soul is in Intellect, it is assimilated to it, so memory can only be, subsequently, of the fact that an act of intellection has taken place, cf. lines 21–25 below.

1, 19–20 *Immediate apprehension*: This is an attempt to render *athroa epibolê*: *epibolê* is a kind of intense focusing on something without the involvement of any process; *athroa* means that it is concentrated, as opposed to the diffusion involved in discursive reasoning. The nature of *athroa epibolê* is perhaps best shown by the fact that Plotinus will use it to describe apprehension of the One, cf. III.8.9, 21–22, and—more guardedly (*epibolêi tini*), "with

some sort of direct apprehension"—at VI.7.35, 19–23; see further Rist 1967, 48–52. The term *epibolê* is in origin Epicurean, used to indicate a form of direct apprehension that does not come under the heading of sensation, cf. e.g. Epicurus, *Letter to Herodotus*, *ap.* Diogenes Laertius 10. 38, and is one of a very small number of probable instances of Epicurean ideas in the *Enneads*; others are the use of *enargeia*, "clarity," used by Epicurus of the perspicuity of information provided by the senses, again in relation to apprehension of the One, cf. III.8.6, 14–17, and of *kinêsis* in the discussion of pleasure at I.4.12, 5–10.

1, 25–35 That before and after can apply only to an order or arrangement is a consequence of the fact that time belongs to a lower level of being, namely soul: on its appearance at that level, cf. III.7.11, 20–35. At that level, the progress from one item to another, as in discursive reasoning, entails the progress of time as well. For order, *taxis*, used of things that are unchanging, cf. 3.10, 2–9 above.

1, 26 *Having a point to focus on*: The noun *enapereisis*, which is here translated by this rather circumlocutory phrase, appears to occur nowhere else.

1, 31–34 *But when a soul looks at one thing*: The underlying doctrine here is that, when soul looks at the contents of Intellect, it does so in its own manner, namely by moving

from one item or proposition to another, and doing so in succession. That different cognitive powers cognize things in a mode appropriate to their nature became a firm epistemological principle by the time of Proclus, cf. *Platonic Theology* I 15. 18–21 Saffrey-Westerink, and *Commentary on the Timaeus* I 352. 15–19 Diehl.

1, 34–35 *The activities take place as a whole*: In so far as activities are envisaged as being in Intellect—because everything that exists below it must be there in some form, and a superior one at that (cf. V.8.7, 17)—they can only be potential.

1, 36 *When <many things> come to be*: As observed in the footnote to the translation, the text here is seriously disturbed. On the whole, we are inclined to follow the rather bold suggestion of Igal, *ginomenôn <êdê pollôn ouk aei pasai>*, as it makes reasonable sense, and the error could have been caused by haplology of *êdê.* Even so, however, Plotinus is not here at his most perspicuous. Richard King analyses the course of argument here as follows ([2009], 200):

"What Plotinus apparently wishes to deny is that one can think about intelligibles in isolation; when you think of one, you are thinking of them all, without there being memory necessary when you move from one to another preserving the last form thought of. Although each act of thought is distinct, and one thing after another is thought

of, and there is hence an order of thought, with before and after, it is the unity of the capacity (to think and be thought of) that holds the actual thinking together."

Chapter 2

Further observations on the working of intellect, and of soul when it is in a state of assimilation to it.

2, 1–8 Plotinus here makes some shrewd observations on the characteristics of intense contemplative activity even when the soul is in the body: when one is engaged in intellection—let us say, solving a mathematical problem—one is not also conscious that it is oneself that is working on the problem, or that one is either a soul or an intellect. This is adduced only as an analogy to the state of consciousness of a soul in the realm of intellect, where there is no room for the sort of self-reflective consciousness that involves memory.

2, 7–8 *Making oneself available to it in the role of matter*: We may note the portrayal of our soul as a kind of matter in relation to what it contemplates, a concept for which we may compare e.g. the little note at III.9 [13] 5: "The soul

itself must exist as a seeing, with intellect as the object of its vision. It is indeterminate (*aoriston*) prior to its seeing, but naturally adapted to intelligizing; so it is matter in relation to intellect." Cf. also V.9 [5] 4, 11–12.

2, 8–14 Plotinus seems here first to entertain a vexatious *aporia*, raising the question as to whether, if one is thinking nothing, one would be in actuality nothing. His response is that, at least as regards the intellectual realm (with which he is now concerned), the individual mind embraces all things in that realm, including itself, so there is no question of its being empty.

2, 12 *With his attention focused on himself*: Here again Plotinus uses the term *epibolê*, cf. 1, 19–20, and note there.

2, 14–15 An objection, which Plotinus goes on to argue is not a real one, because soul cannot change from one object of thought to another when it is operating at the level of intellect: that is what Plotinus says he has already ruled out, cf. 1, 15–16 above. Most of the rest of this chapter is given up to an extended consideration of how soul functions when it is at the higher level.

2, 15–18 *Since it can also advance further inward*: "Inward" could mean either toward the intellect, which would be inside the area on the boundaries of which Plotinus has

just said soul is situated, or toward the soul's own interior, where intellect would be, from the point of view that higher reality is internal to the individual, cf. V.I.10, 5–6. Either way, soul assimilates to intellect, so the philosophical destination is the same, but the method of arriving there is not.

2, 20–22 *On the other hand, we should say no change takes place*: Since some others (including Armstrong) have thought otherwise, it is worth pointing out that the subject of both these sentences must be *nous*, "intellect," as is shown by the masculine pronoun *autos* in 22. The following sentence changes the subject back to soul.
The "other things" are the things pertaining to, or contained in, Intellect, and correspond to "what belongs to it," as is shown by the correspondence of the prepositions *apo* and *epi* in the two parallel temporal clauses.

2, 22–32 Plotinus now focuses on the situation of the soul when lodged in the intelligible. It must then be in an unchanging state, although retaining some form of awareness of itself.

2, 24 *When it is purely in the intelligible* (katharôs en tôi noêtôi ousa): The same words, used here of the soul, were used of the person in 1, 10. In both cases, the point at issue is the state of the soul when it is assimilated to Intellect.

2, 28–29 *And having been fitted to it*: Soul then attains the condition described in line 22: both subject and object are one. Being made one with the object of its activity is also used to describe the state of soul when it is exercising intellection at 3.8, 13–16 above. Plotinus here is plainly much exercised to preserve the distinction between intellect and soul in its highest state, while not admitting any of the discursivity characteristic of soul at its own proper level.

Chapter 3

It is only when the soul falls away from union with Intellect that memory arises.

3, 1–12 Plotinus now sketches the situation of the soul when it is no longer in communion with Intellect, since only at this stage does memory arise. Memories may be of the intelligible realm, of the heavens, or of the terrestrial realm, according as the soul's impulse draws it to one level of being or another.

3, 1–4 *But when it has departed from there*: The language here is curiously reminiscent of the beginning of V.1 [10] 1, 1–9. Again, Plotinus talks in terms of a "fall," and a

certain wilfulness on the part of the soul, although this whole process is an essential and normal aspect of the development of the universe.

3, 3 *As it were*, *poking its head out*: The verb *prokyptô* occurs only here in Plotinus (though it is commonly used by medical writers such as Galen and Soranus of the infant poking its head out of the womb; so also Porphyry in *To Gauros*,16. 5); but cf. *ekkupsasai* in 3.15, 1 above, of the souls "peering out from the intelligible realm."

3, 4–10 We hear again of the double nature of memory, as at 3.29–31, and of its connection with *phantasia*, which is itself of necessity double. The soul now acquires memories of what is "above," and these assist in bearing it up, while its "newly-acquired," memories of the sense-world (though in fact there is no temporal process involved) serve to enmesh it in that realm of existence.

3, 11 *And being a boundary entity*: The description of a soul as *methorion*, here translated "a boundary entity," recalls the description of the souls as *amphibioi*, "having a double life," in IV.8 [6] 4, 32.

Chapter 4

Extension of the concept of memory to cover unconscious memory. This can apply to "potential" memory in the intellectual realm as well as dispositional memory in the sensible realm.

4, 1–20 Plotinus begins with the rather curious remark that, when established in the intelligible realm, the soul may even "see" the Good, since Intellect does not constitute a barrier, but rather a conduit, for the rightly-constituted soul. One might be forgiven for discerning an autobiographical element here, as Plotinus feels that he has had fairly regular contact with the Intelligible (he has been "There"), and occasionally, on Porphyry's testimony (*Life of Plotinus*, 23), has even been united with the One; but the remark seems nonetheless less than relevant to the present discussion. The main issue, which also arises from Plotinus' personal experience, is that, on descending from the intelligible realm, one does find that one has memories of having been There (cf. the autobiographical passage IV.8.1).

So the question arises whether some intellections are being generated that become available to the memory subsequent to the descent from the intelligible realm. This leads Plotinus into some interesting reflections on unconscious memory, at the lower level as well as the higher. As he points out (10ff.), one can have a situation

where the body "remembers" some procedure, in the sense of acquiring a habit or a disposition (*diathesis*), which can have a stronger influence on behavior than a memory that is consciously acknowledged. As he says, "it could be that when one knows (*eidôs*) something, one would possess this as something different to oneself (*hôs allo ekhoi allos autos ôn*), while if one does not know (*agnoôn*) that one has it, one may very well end up being what one has (*kindyneuei einai ho ekhei*)." That is the danger of entertaining unworthy sensations: the memories generated become second nature: they enter the subconscious, and one can no longer maintain any distance from them. One feels that Plotinus would endorse, with some reservations, the well-known dictum of William James, in *Principles of Psychology*, Vol. I, that "My experience is what I agree to attend to. Only those items which I notice shape my mind." For Plotinus, it is indeed one's chief focus of attention that gives content to one's consciousness, but one must take account of the influence of subconscious memories as well.

These remarks, however, perceptive though they are, are incidental to the main point being made (15ff.), that, at the higher level also, memories may not be available to the consciousness, as being "potential," only becoming actualized when the soul descends once more into discursive thought.

4, 3–5 *Even when there are bodies in between*: It is not quite clear what Plotinus has in mind by his statement that even in the corporeal realm, bodies may connect with each other even through an intermediary; but one might think of phenomena like heat, or an electric shock, being transmitted through an intermediary body.

4, 16–17 *For the memories are not after all like impressions*: Once again, a criticism of the Stoic theory of memories as "impressions" (*typoi*). *Typoi* cannot be potential; they are either there or not. So the theory of the potential presence of memories in the intelligible realm would be rendered absurd by such a postulate.

Chapter 5

The role of memory (a) when the soul is united with the intelligible, and (b) when it is residing at its own, psychic, level.

5, 1–22 Plotinus opens with a challenging puzzle: is it the faculty of memory that actualizes the items of intelligible reality that are subsequently remembered (by someone like Plotinus himself, who has "been There"), or is it perhaps the faculty of intellect itself that does this? If we can say

that we actually "saw" the intelligible realities (the Forms), then it will be the intellect—or perhaps more properly, the "undescended" aspect of our soul—which cognizes its objects intuitively, not discursively. If not, then we will have to say it is memory.

Once again, we may discern an autobiographical element in Plotinus' theorizing. In trying to specify how one may cognize, non-discursively, intelligible reality, he deprecates the use of, first, what he terms *eikasia*, which we take to mean here, not so much "conjecture" (though that sense, doubtless, is not far away), but rather the adducing of *eikones*, images or analogies, drawn from the sense-world, or *syllogismos*, arguments constructed from premises similarly derived from the sense-world. He then introduces the image of ascending to a vantage point and viewing a scene that no one else who had not thus ascended can see. It becomes really impossible to describe meaningfully to those who have not "ascended" the nature of one's visions there.

The problem is that such vision transcends normal consciousness, whereas the soul's memory is characterized by consciousness, which only arises "in the heavens" (*arkhesthai ap' ouranou*, l. 12), or the celestial realm, which is subject to space and time, and thus the proper abode of soul. At this level, the soul can "remember," at least to some extent, what the intellect "saw" in the intelligible realm. It also, he goes on to say (13ff.), naturally retains memories of much of what it experienced "here" (*enthade*),

while in the body, and in particular is able to recognize other souls, of people that it had known in the body. In this connection, Plotinus advances the interesting theory that, despite the fact that their "pneumatic bodies" (as mentioned back in 3.15, 1–4) are luminous and spherical, the souls still retain certain "characters and peculiarities" (*êthê kai tropoi*) which make them recognizable. He even raises the possibility (21–22) that they might be able to engage is some form of converse (*dialegesthai*), without wishing to commit himself entirely on that.

5, 5–6 *One must not give an account of them*: What, one might ask, would be the nature of the analogies or syllogisms that one might propound in an effort to describe the vision of the intelligible? One possibility that occurs is his notable comparison of such a vision, in VI.7.15, 25–8, to "a living richly-varied sphere," or "a thing all face, shining with living faces"—an image that is then significantly qualified, just below (31–33), by specifying that this is still to see "from the outside": "one must instead become that, and make oneself the contemplation."

5, 10–11 *Ascending to some high vantage point* (epi tinos hypsêlês skopias): It is possible here that Plotinus has in mind the passage from Book X of the *Odyssey* (97–99), where Odysseus, on arrival at the island of the Laestrygonians,

climbs "to a rugged height, a point of outlook (*skopiên es paipaloessan*)," and sees what none of his companions can see.

5, 22–31 We return to the question of the re-activation of memory after descent from the intelligible. What is at issue here primarily, we may presume, is recollection of the Forms, of which the souls will have enjoyed immediate cognition when in the intelligible—though it is notable that Plotinus makes no explicit mention of the Platonic doctrine of *anamnêsis*, here or anywhere else; he simply has no need of it. Once down "in the heavens," however, such cognition will be at one remove, and contaminated with memories from below.

Furthermore, once they have returned to the sensible realm, provided they do not descend to the lowest level, they will retain sufficient intimations of higher reality—specifically, of the Forms—to enable them to reascend. Of course, even souls that have descended into animal bodies do have a way back, but the precise mechanics of that remain obscure.

5, 28–31 *To the lowest level* (eis pan bathos, 28; ep' eskhaton topon, 31): Presumably meaning entry into an animal body (a possibility which Plotinus was prepared to entertain, cf. III.4 [15] 2, 16–30; VI.7 [38] 6, 20ff.; but note the more ambivalent passage in the late treatise I.1 [53] 11, 9–15, where he suggests that the rational soul is more loosely attached to an animal body (*paron ou parestin autois*).

Chapter 6

The problem of the souls of the heavenly bodies: is the concept of memory appropriate to them?

6, 1–13 Turning now to the inhabitants of the celestial realm, Plotinus reiterates the principle that "memory is of things that have happened and become past," so that it cannot apply, not just to entities in the eternality of the intelligible realm, but even to entities that remain permanently in the same condition, such as is the case with the souls of the heavenly bodies, the World Soul, and above all, the hypostasis Soul itself—here characterized as "Zeus." In the case of beings such as this, there can be no question of their experiencing such mental acts as "discursive reasonings" (*dianoiai*) or "calculations" (*logismoi*), since there is nothing that they need to learn or to deliberate about.

6, 4–6 *Our enquiry is also directed*: The use of the compound verb *epizêtei*, "enquire *in addition*," seems to indicate some consciousness on the part of Plotinus that this enquiry into the status of memory in souls other than human is something of a digression; if so, this would be picked up by the compound *epitolmêsei*, "will dare *in addition*," in l. 6, in respect of Zeus.

6, 8 *The memories of Zeus himself*: The role and status of Zeus in Plotinus' metaphysical scheme can be discussed at more length in chs. 9 and 10, but here he would seem to stand for the hypostasis Soul, in its "demiurgic" role.

6, 13–16 *But they would not even have thoughts . . . in relation to human affairs*: The most troublesome problem that might occur to us as we consider the status of the celestial souls is their widely-accepted concern for events of earth, which would of course involve them in observing sequences of events, and thus opening the way for memory of past events. But here Plotinus steps in to halt such a line of thought by anticipating his discussion of this question in chs. 30–45 below (cf. also the late tractate II.3 [52], "On Whether the Stars are Causes"), and declaring that the mode of providential supervision exercised by the heavenly bodies is of a quite different nature, and does not involve their having to concern themselves with individual events or persons.

6, 16 *For the method of ordering things well*: The term *euthymosynê*, here translated "method of ordering things well," is a notable one, perhaps borrowed from Hesiod, *Works and Days* 471, where he states, apropos of observing prudent practices in plowing, that "good management is best" (*euthymosynê gar aristê*). Plotinus uses the word again

at VI.8 [39] 17, 1–7, in a passage that actually throws some light on his thinking here:

"We affirm that each and every thing in the universe, and this universe itself, is as it would have been if the free choice of its Maker had willed it, and its state is as if this Maker, proceeding regularly in his calculations with foresight, had made it according to his providence (*kata pronoian*). But since things here are always like this and always come to be like this, so their rational principles (*logoi*) also always rest among the things which exist altogether, standing still in a better order (*en meizoni euthymosynêi*)." (trans. Armstrong, slightly altered)

This passage reminds us that the Maker of the universe (most directly Soul, or Zeus) is not obliged to concern itself with detailed planning in order to maintain the universe in its best state; it only seems as though it were. And so it is with the heavenly bodies; they are merely signifiers of a more transcendental ordering. On the question of Plotinus' view of the providential role of the stars, see Dillon [1999].

Chapter 7

Further discussion of the status of the celestial souls.

7, 1–17 Plotinus continues his analysis of the situation of the star-souls.Although they are not static, but circulate in regular orbits, the planetary souls do not experience *change* in the sublunar sense—nothing *different* happens to them. Even though from our perspective it might seem that they performed an orbit yesterday, or last year—as would be the situation, say, of an astronaut in a space station; for them, on the other hand, these regular circuits are not distinguishable one from the other. Plotinus here produces the most acute analogy of analyzing a single footstep into a multiple series of "frames," as it were, distinguishing a succession of segments of the same movement.

A more substantial problem is then presented: is it not so that the heavenly bodies actually follow different orbits in the course of the year, and pass through a succession of zodiacal signs, which they would surely note as a succession of events? And of course there is the problem of their supposed supervision of human affairs, which would also involve consciousness of succession. These questions are left for the next chapter.

7, 1 *Well then, will they not remember that they saw God?*: Plotinus generally uses the term "God" (*theos*), as here, to refer to Intellect (though on occasion also to the One, cf. e.g. I.1.8, 9; I.8.2, 25; II.3.18, 10; and note V.5.3, 1–5, where we have the two "gods" compared and contrasted). Here

the assumption is that the celestial souls enjoy uninterrupted contemplation of the intelligible realm.

7, 8 *And made many of the one thing*: A slight textual problem here, arising from the *hena* of the mss., necessarily referring back to *hormên* (fem.), here translated "movement," rather than to the masculine *poda*, "foot." A solution, proposed by Theiler, is to emend to the neuter *hen*, which can acceptably refer back to *hormên*, while balancing the neuter plural *polla*. We accept this, and translate "made many of the one thing." Note *hormê* here used in the sense of the initiation of an individual motion; cf. below, 32, 42, where it is used to express the "impulse" of a function or activity (*tên hormên tou ergou*).

Chapter 8

*Further consideration of the situation of the heavenly souls leads to various interesting reflections on the nature of memory, and in particular the phenomenon of attention or awareness (*synaisthêsis*).*

8, 1–7 By way of introduction, Plotinus advances a number of propositions that he proposes to explore further. He

focuses here first on the interesting question of "attention," which may be defined as the cognitive process of selectively concentrating on one aspect of the environment while ignoring other things, a topic that has much exercised modern neuroscientists, and a phenomenon to which he here applies the term *epibolê* (l. 6). Obviously, he says, at the highest level there is no quotient of memory involved in *theoria* of intelligible reality, while in the physical world we screen out most of the content of our visual field before it reaches the *phantasia*. One may, for instance, walk up to the corner shop from one's house to buy a newspaper, and pass quite a number of people, dogs, etc., of whom one takes no notice whatever, but then meet one particular friend, with whom we have a chat, the meeting with whom we then remember (and report back to our wife). The others "supervene entirely accidentally" (*kata symbebêkos epakolouthousi*), and the attention mechanism of our brain effectively screens them out.

Again, in the process of attending to a physical object, let us say a painting—and preferably one with allegorical significance, such as to attract the attention of our reason—we do not concern ourselves with the individual details (let us say, the painting of individual blades of grass or sections of sky), unless perhaps we have a technical reason to do so (we are an art critic, perhaps, or a rival painter). The same could be applied to listening to a string quartet: we

will not generally be concerned with the individual notes, unless we are a professional musician with a reason to do so.

8, 3–4 *In the case of things where thinking and knowledge are operative to a greater extent*: There is an interesting textual problem here: the great majority of mss. read *energestera*, which we render "operative," to qualify *hê noêsis kai hê gnosis*, but ms. U (Vaticanus Urbinas gr. 62) reads the (superficially quite plausible) *enargestera*, "clearer," and this is adopted by Creuzer. However, this is likely to be either a slip of the pen, or the correction of a "clever" scribe, as the rarer comparative *energestera* is what is needed, since what Plotinus wants to describe is a situation where intellectual attention is the *dominant* factor. He uses the word again at V.8.8, 8, this time with the unanimity of the mss. Oddly, there Armstrong, while printing the correct reading, translates "clearer" (which is the emendation of Kirchhoff)!

8, 7–16 Plotinus now proceeds to expand on his first point, about attention in relation to physical objects. His description of the way in which the *aisthêsis* may be involuntarily stimulated by different objects of vision that are of no relevance to us, without the soul (sc. the *phantasia*) receiving them into itself, does seem to justify the claim made by E. R. Dodds many years ago (Dodds 1960) that Plotinus may be credited with discovering the unconscious.

Plotinus recognizes that the soul has a built-in filtering device that decides that a given sense-datum has no usefulness (*khreia*) or other advantage for the organism over which it presides, and so screens it out.

Another acute discussion of this topic occurs, we may note, in the earlier tractate IV.9 [8] 2, apropos the question as to whether, and to what extent, all souls are one. Plotinus argues that many sensations strike one or another part of our bodies without the whole organism taking note of them. In that case, as in this, Plotinus' observations are incidental to another topic—here, that the star-souls do not necessarily have consciousness, and therefore memory, of each stage of their circuits.

8, 16–30 Plotinus now proceeds to expand on the point he made above (7, 5–9) about not dividing up a single step into individual segments or "stills." If we imagine ourselves going for a walk along a regular route, for the purpose of exercise, and not because we want to get from one place to another, we will take no conscious notice of passing through this or that segment of air, or passing over each individual piece of ground. We may notice various aspects of the scenery as we walk along, but our individual footfalls we do not notice—or even if some minimal consciousness of these occurs, we do not retain it or reflect upon it, especially if there is no definite time limit or distance at issue.

8, 23 *Or . . . to pass through it at all*: Vitringa proposed excising this phrase as a gloss, but it seems to make perfectly good sense—and indeed it is hard to see why anyone should want to add it.

8, 30–52 Plotinus now refers these observations back to the case of the celestial souls, which is the topic that really concerns him. Pursuing the analogy of our regular walk for the purpose of exercise, we may grasp how the celestial souls may complete circuit after circuit of the heavens, each identical with the last, without having to take any note (and thus experiencing any memory) of the details of their passage, their minds being fixed on higher things. He then produces the image of a dance, to be thought of as a whole coherent event, not to be divided into parts, so that there should be no memory of the "pastness" of the individual motions involved.

8, 35 *Performing their own functions* (ta hautôn prattonta): As Luc Brisson points out (2005: 248, n. 64), this could be seen as an allusion to Plato's definition of justice in *Republic* IV. One might add that it accords well also with Plotinus' own definition of the "paradigmatic" level of justice in I.2.7, 4–5, as *oikeiopragia*, or "performing one's proper role," which suits the celestial souls very well.

8, 43 *Their movement is not spatial but vital* (ou topikon, alla zôtikon): A nice distinction, the implication being that motions expressive of life do not necessarily involve spatiality, being primarily internal, and only incidentally external. The same point is made in the earlier essay II.2 [14] 1, 1–11, "On the Motion of the Heavens," where Plotinus insists that the motion of the celestial soul should not be regarded as *topikê*, but rather *synaisthêtikê kai synnoêtikê kai zôtikê*.

8, 45–49 *Indeed if one were to liken their movement to a dance*: The image of the dance is much beloved of Plotinus (cf. e.g. the dance of the soul around the One at VI.9 [9] 8, 38–39, 4; or as part of the great image of the life of man as a play, at III.2 [47] 16, 23–27), but here the point is rather that the dance should be viewed as a whole, rather than as a spatio-temporal sequence of steps. The likening of the motions of the heavenly bodies to a dance goes back, of course, to Plato's *Timaeus*, 40c.

8, 52–61 Plotinus here seems to adduce the concept of the harmony of the spheres to reinforce his vision of the mode of existence of the heavenly beings. We presume that the reference to the "inclination to one thing" (*pros hen neusis*, 54) of the souls of the heavenly bodies is not an allusion to their contemplation of One as such, but simply their attention to a common object, thus suggesting that

the fixed stars and the planets, though actually revolving in opposite directions (cf. *Tim.* 38c–39e), are all part of a single unified structure. We may compare with this his earlier description in 3.12, esp. 8–30, where the harmonious concord of the World Soul is being discussed.

Chapter 9

The World Soul in its demiurgic role, symbolized here by Zeus. How can it not have memory?

9, 1–18 Plotinus now turns to a description of the World Soul in its capacity as creator and principle of order of the cosmos, for which he employs the mythological term "Zeus." Plotinus' use of Zeus, however, is fraught with complications, as he also on occasion (cf. III.5 [50] 8—where Aphrodite, for mythological reasons, plainly has to be the World Soul) chooses to identify him with Intellect. He may not, however, have felt that there was any great contradiction involved here, as the World Soul in its highest aspect, fully in touch with Intellect, can be taken by Plotinus to be more or less equivalent to Intellect in its "lower" emanative aspect, in which the Forms flow forth into Soul as *logoi*, and thence proceed to bestow a rational

structure on the cosmos—as indeed is intimated in 3.12 above. The question here, however, is: how could such a being, concerned as it is with the succession of cosmic cycles (*periodoi*), not have a memory?

To counter this, Plotinus first raises an *aporia* arising from the circumstance that, if one rejects (as does Plotinus) the idea that the world has a temporal beginning, Zeus would be required to have memory, and therefore knowledge, of an infinite series of events, and, as is generally agreed, knowledge of an infinite series is impossible. This prepares the solution that Plotinus is working toward, that the sort of knowledge the World Soul has of the infinite sequence of cosmic events is *synoptic*: it views the world as a continuous present, so that once again, as in the case of the celestial souls, there is no occasion for memory. There is indeed an infinity proper to the World Soul, but it is an infinity of *power*, not of temporal succession; and it knows the physical cosmos, not as something external, but *as its own contents*; and the multiplicity of those contents is no obstacle to its knowing them all as one.

9, 1–3 *But Zeus who orders and manages and arranges all things for all time*: The characterization of "Zeus" here borrows both from the myth of the *Phaedrus*, where Zeus is portrayed (246e4–5) as riding out at the head of the company of gods, "endowing the totality with order and watching over it" (*diakosmôn panta kai epimeloumenos*); and from the

Philebus (30d1–2), where he is credited with "a royal soul and a royal intellect" (*basilikê psykhe*, *basilikos nous*). Behind all this, however, is a tradition of exegesis that equated the Demiurge of the *Timaeus* with a rational World Soul.

9, 4 *Rolls out their many cycles*: What is here to be made of the mention of cosmic cycles (*periodoi*)? There is a similar mention back in 3.12, 27–31, where Plotinus speaks of "revolutions and orders and passing through lives in their several kinds" (*periodoi kai taxeis kai biôn kata genê diexodoi*). These would not be Stoic-style world-cycles, in which Plotinus did not believe, but rather soul-cycles as portrayed in *Phaedrus* 248e–249b.

Chapter 10

The distinction between "Demiurge" and World Soul becomes more marked, as discussion now focuses on whether the World Soul, as opposed to Intellect (or pure Soul?), must be regarded as having consciousness of temporal succession, and thus being endowed with memory. This possibility too Plotinus rejects.

10, 1–29 The focus now switches to the immanent ruling principle (*to hêgemonoun*) of the universe, commonly

termed the World Soul, or "Soul of the Universe" (*hê tou pantos psychê*), as here, which is more intimately and inextricably involved in temporality than is Intellect, even in its "creative" mode. One might be tempted here to take the "demiurge" to refer, not to Intellect *tout court*, but rather to the hypostasis Soul in its most transcendent mode, insofar as it is focused on Intellect and receptive of creative *logoi* from that source, but Plotinus does here seem to be referring simply to Intellect. He speaks, after all, of "removing altogether the notion of 'before' and 'after,' and giving him one unchangeable and timeless life," which can really only apply to the realm of Intellect, as the generation of space and time, albeit synoptically, is a characteristic of even pure Soul. See, however, the perceptive discussion of Blumenthal [1974], as to the tendency in Plotinus' thought to blur the distinction between Intellect proper and Soul in its highest aspect, which will in any case be closely attached to Intellect; also O'Meara [1980], who has a good discussion of Plotinus' theory of demiurgic creation.

As in the earlier tractate V.9 [5] 3, 25–37, Plotinus is concerned to distinguish two aspects of creation, the transcendent and the immanent. There, he compares the role of Intellect with the art (*tekhnê*) that inspires the soul of the artist to create works of art, and that of the World Soul to the soul, or consciousness, of the artist, which actually drives the creation of the work. In V.8 [31] 7, 13–17 he touches on the same theme, speaking of an "imprint

and image" (*indalma kai eikôn*) of a Form being imposed on matter through the agency of Soul.

The respective roles of Intellect and Soul being thus distinguished, the question arises as to how Soul, especially in its immanent aspect, can avoid being involved in deliberation, and thus a succession of experiences, and thus becoming liable to memory. Surely, it might be argued, such a soul is involved in deliberating (*logizesthai*, 8) and in considering what to do next, and so the exercise of memory is unavoidable.

No, says Plotinus, once again we must focus on the *permanence* of the relationship of Soul with Intellect: "This is the activity of a soul that depends on an intellection (*phronêsis*) that remains as it is, of which the order in the soul is an image (*eikôn*) (11–13)." There is no planning or deliberating required in the ordinary sense of such terms. Soul views the physical universe synoptically, from the top down, so that the opposition and struggles of the parts are not a problem for it. Very much the same point is made at the beginning of the later tractate VI.7 [38]1, 28–58. There Plotinus asserts that, although the universe certainly looks as if it is the result of the most excellent planning, there has been in fact no planning process:

"Therefore neither forethought (*pronoia*) for a living thing nor forethought for this universe in general derived from a plan (*logismos*); since there is no planning there at all, but it is called planning to show that all things there

are as they would be as a result of planning at a later stage, and foresight (*prohorasis*) because it is as a wise man would foresee it." (28–33, trans. Armstrong)

10, 8–9 *In reasoning, or in considering what it must do*: It may be, as suggested by Armstrong *ad loc.*, that this is a criticism directed by Plotinus against those, such as Jews or Christians, who believe in a God who plans in advance how he will construct his world, and then carries out his plans. There does, at any rate, seem to be a similar criticism implied in V.8.7, 2–8:

"Are we to think that its (sc. the world's) maker conceived earth in his own mind, and then water and its place upon earth, and then the other things in their order up to heaven, then all living things, each with the sort of shapes which they have now, and their particular internal organs and outward parts, and then when he had them all arranged in his mind proceeded to his work?"

It is almost as if Plotinus has in mind here the first chapter of Genesis!

10, 12 *The activity of a soul . . . remains as it is*: The syntax here, with its run of genitives, has caused some confusion in the manuscript tradition, a majority reading *mesês ousês phronêseôs*, "intellection, or reasoning, being the intermediary" (presumably between soul and intellect), rather than *menousês phronêseôs*, "an intellection that remains (as

it is)," the reading of the manuscripts A and E. The use of *phronêsis* is perhaps slightly peculiar, but it refers to the permanent activity of Intellect, of which soul's activity is an image; cf. e.g. I.6 [1] 6, 12: "wisdom is the activity of intellect in withdrawal from what is lower, and leading the soul to what is above"; also VI.6 [34] 18, 20–25.

10, 16–17 *Not ruling sometimes and at other times being ruled*: This constitutes a firm assertion of monism, denying any role in creation, or any force in the world, to any other principle or principles, such as a disorderly soul or matter, such as might be postulated by Gnostics or Christians—or indeed by earlier Platonists such as Numenius.

Chapter 11

Further analysis of the mode of creation and administration of the universe by Soul in its immanent capacity, as Nature.

11, 1–28 Plotinus now proceeds to develop the distinction between the external and the internal administration of an organism, in order to focus on the particular role of Nature (*physis*), as the "lower" and immanent aspect of the World Soul. He produces first the illuminating analogy of the

doctor, treating an illness with medication, prescriptions for diet, and so on—and thus working on an organism from without, and with conscious deliberation—and the nature of the organism itself, absorbing the medication and working away on the organism from the inside, without conscious deliberation. In the case of the cosmos, as opposed to the individual, this process is eternal, and thus there is once again no need to postulate "reasoning or counting (*arithmêsis*) or memory" (11–12), but even in the individual, as Plotinus points out (16–21), we can observe a sequence of natural developments arising as the organism matures (e.g. horns or beard) which do not involve separate planning, but are provided for in the original *logos* (or as we would say, the DNA) of the individual. Even so in the universe, what seems to us a vast and complex sequence of historical developments does not require planning or deliberation on the part of the World Soul, as it is all comprehended in the *logos* of the whole. The World Soul thus subsists in a sempiternal present, and there is once again no need to postulate memory.

11, 3 *Like a doctor*: For other examples of medical imagery in Plotinus, cf. III.1 [3] 1, 30; VI.4 [22] 5, 15; VI.8 [39] 5, 19–21.

11, 11 *The natures in the branches*: For this comparison with the branches and the whole plant, cf. the notable image of the "great plant" in 3.7, 26–33 above.

11, 21–22 *The earlier rational principles are not lost*: The point of this remark presumably is that, since these *logoi* are incorporeal, the supervening of other *logoi* in the organism does not eliminate them (that would after all constitute a sequence of events); they simply cease to be operative as such.

Chapter 12

Further on the issue of deliberation and memory on the part of the "wisdom" administering the universe.

12, 1–7 Plotinus now embarks on a full-throated polemic against those who attribute "reasonings and memories" to the Wisdom (*phronesis*) that is the immanent administrator of the universe (*en tôi panti ousês*). It is difficult here not to assume that he has some such opponents as the Christians in mind—but perhaps also, as Armstrong suggests, "simple-minded Platonists." This category may in fact include the majority of Middle Platonists, such as Plutarch and Atticus,

Severus, and even Porphyry's own teacher Longinus, as the concept of effortless creation by the Demiurge, free of any element of specific planning or deliberation, seems to be a development of Plotinus himself.

12, 7–18 *Like someone playing the lyre with a view to achieving the art of lyre-playing*: The comparison of the reasoner (*ho logizomenos*) to someone playing a musical instrument by way of practice, in order to attain proficiency, as opposed to a proficient musician playing for pleasure, or in performance, is striking and perceptive. The state of mind of the proficient artist, who will hold the whole composition in his head simultaneously, provides an excellent analogy to the providential attention of the Demiurge. This can be characterized as a state of "rest" (*stasis*, 17; cf. *energeia hestôsa* in 3.18, 12 above). For the allied idea that the soul of the wise man involved in contemplation is "at rest," cf. III.8 [30] 6, 34–40.

12, 18–29 Soul's knowledge of the future, Plotinus argues, does not involve reasoning (*logismos*) any more than knowledge of the present, assuming that it is fully cognizant, and in control, of how things will turn out.

12, 23–24 *Would not be such as prophets have*: What is the point here of the contrast with the sort of knowledge possessed by prophets (*manteis)*—assuming that they are

competent prophets? Presumably the difference is that prophets, even if they can correctly divine the future, are not doing so as something that they are in control of, and so there is a sense of "futurity" and temporal succession in their predictions which is not a feature of Soul's knowledge of it.

12, 29–49 Plotinus now turns to consider the alternative possibility that the demiurgic Intellect (or possibly, the highest element of Soul, cf. comments above on ch. 10) does not produce by virtue of knowledge (*eidêsis*), or by looking to the "blueprint" (*paradeigma*) which resides within it. In that case, it would produce at random (*eikêi*), with the possibility even of failure (36). Its product would be something different to it, and it would be an effort for it to produce it. In fact, however, the "demiurge" is entirely in control (*kratei*, 42); creation is a simple matter of will (*boulêsis*), and this will is identical with his wisdom (*phronêsis*). Once again, then, there is no need to postulate a process of deliberation (*logismos*), or memory.

12, 40–41 *As some have thought*: The reference to those who think that the management of the world is troublesome (*dyskolon*) is probably directed at Gnostics of his acquaintance, but it would also suit the Judaeo-Christian portrayal of a God who labored to create the world, rested

on the seventh day, and then, some time later, repented that he had made it.

12, 45–46 *Since for such a one his will is wisdom*: We may compare the discussion of God's will in VI.8 [39] 6, 13 and 21. Here his *boulêsis* is equated with his *noêsis*.

Chapter 13

Comparison and contrast between Intellect and Nature.

13, 1–26 Plotinus now, in response to what may seem a rather tendentious *aporia*, moves to draw a firm distinction between the levels of consciousness of Intellect, which is above the level of imagination (*phantasia*), and Nature (*physis*), which is below it. Neither, admittedly, is also characterized by image-making, but their relations to it are very different, if not antithetical. Intellect does not require *phantasia* to cognize its contents, which are totally unified within in, and integrated with it; Nature is not capable of summoning up images, but acts without the exercise of conscious choice (*aprohairetôs*), passing on to matter automatically the reflections of *logoi* received from above, and thus creating the physical world.

13, 5–7 *As if in thick wax*: The image of the seal on wax is used here in a rather unusual context. We may take it, I think, that Intellect is portrayed as the seal itself, Soul, with the *logoi* imprinted on it, being the body, or upper surface, of the wax, receiving a clear impression, and Nature receiving, *via* Soul, the faint imprint.

13, 7–8 *Thus it does not know, but merely produces*: For another good characterization of the mode of production of Nature, cf. II.3 [52] 17, 1–5:

"But these reason-principles contained in the soul, are they thoughts (*noêmata*)? And if so, by what process does the soul create in accordance with these thoughts? It is upon matter that this act of the reason is exercised; and what acts at the level of Nature (*physikôs*) is not an intellectual operation or a vision, but a power modifying matter—not conscious of it, but merely acting upon it." (trans. MacKenna, slightly modified)

13, 11–12 *For this reason Nature does not possess imagination either*: That Nature produces without generating a mental image (*aphantastôs*) is originally a Stoic doctrine (cf. *SVF* II 458), but thoroughly adopted by Plotinus; cf. e.g. the immediately preceding treatise III.6 [26] 4, 23–24.

13, 21–22 *The last things that belong to the intelligible*: These would be the so-called forms-in-matter (*enula eidê*), the

immanent projections of the Forms, employed by Nature in its structuring of matter. The mention of the "realm of images" in 22 would seem to embody a reference to *Timaeus* 50c5, where the Receptacle is characterized as such.

13, 22–25 *But Nature acts on matter and is affected by it*: We find here once again a triadic sequence of levels of being, ranked according to their degree of involvement with matter, the lowest being Nature, which is affected (*paskhousa*) as well as active, next up being the World Soul, which acts without being affected by what is below it; and at the summit an entity which one might expect to be Intellect, but, since it is accorded a *feminine* article (*hê de*), may well be thought of as the highest level of pure Soul—once again bringing to the fore a systematic ambiguity in Plotinus' metaphysical scheme. The truth may be, as suggested by Blumenthal [1974], that Plotinus is not concerned to make any very clear distinction between them.

Chapter 14

Further exploration of the mode in which Nature generates the physical world, and in particular living bodies.

14, 1–14 Plotinus' attention now turns to the mode in which Nature informs living bodies. He sees the imposition of form on the basic elements of the physical universe, earth, water, air and fire, as somehow non-problematic—"the elements are just that (*auto touto*), bodies"; it is the mode in which Nature operates in living organisms that interests him. For this, he produces two analogies: the first, the presence of light in air, is one that he makes use of on a number of other occasions (see below); but here he sets it aside in favor of another, that of the heat from fire in an object that has been heated: unlike the case of light, which disappears instantaneously from air when the source of light is removed, the heat from fire stays on for some time in the heated object, and only gradually withdraws. The point of the analogy here is presumably that the shape (*morphê*) that Nature bestows on a living organism does not depart suddenly on its death, but remains in place for varying amounts of time, becoming almost a separate form, distinct from Nature itself. The analogy of light in air is actually more relevant to the relation of the higher soul to its body: when it departs, it departs instantaneously and completely, like a light being turned off. Both of these analogies, in fact, he makes use of on a number of other occasions, though in conjunction rather than in opposition, as here; in the present tractate, at 3.22, 1–7, and later, at 18, 6 and 29, 1; elsewhere, at e.g. VI.4 [22] 15, 16. The imagery of light is all the more suitable to the case of the soul in

the body in that Plotinus regards light as incorporeal (cf. e.g. IV.5.7, 41–42). For a basic discussion of light-imagery in Plotinus, see Beierwaltes [1961].

14, 10 *But we must consider*: This issue, as to whether there is some other force or entity belonging to the living body between, so to speak, soul proper and nature, is returned to below, in ch.18, where Plotinus discourses on what he there terms the "shadow" or "trace" or "image" of soul, which is for him the proper repository of the passions.

14, 14 *Has already been stated*: That is, in the preceding chapter, where he has distinguished between the ways in which both are exempt from *phantasia*, Nature being a mere "image" (*indalma*, 3) of Wisdom.

Chapter 15

Temporality as a distinctive feature of Soul, in contrast to the eternity of Intellect, and the consequences of that. Special position of pure Soul.

15, 1–20 Plotinus now raises an *aporia* which seems to bring to the surface a number of points of tension in his

doctrine on the relation between Intellect and Soul, and which concerns him for the next three chapters. Plainly, as he says, Intellect subsists in the mode of eternity (*aiôn*), while Soul is associated with time; but Plotinus has the difficulty, created by himself, that pure Soul, Soul as hypostasis, although it generates time, is not to be thought of as being subject to the passage of time, and so to a consciousness of "pastness," and so to experiencing memory. The experience of memory he wishes to be distinctive of individual souls, at least in their embodied state, in which they experience "deficiency" (*endeia*, 12) by reason of being confined in a sequence of temporal moments—and even then he wishes to specify that the souls *in themselves* are eternal (*aidioi*); only in respect of their experiences (*pathê*) and actions (*poiêmata*) are they "in time." We may note in this connection that the World Soul seems in this context to blend with the hypostasis Soul in being exempt from memory, an indication, perhaps, that the distinction between the two is not all that firm in Plotinus' mind after all.

The solution that he wishes to propound involves a distinction between generating time, as does Soul as a whole, which implies being in simultaneous command of the whole stretch of time, and being "in time," as in the case of individual embodied souls, which implies being subject to the passage of time and the sequence of events, which results in a consciousness of both pastness and futurity, the former of these inevitably involving memory.

15, 3 There is a slight syntactical problem here, resulting from Plotinus' somewhat convoluted mode of expression, which has led some scholars to emend the text (Kirchhoff *têi hypostasei* to *tên hypostasin;* Armstrong inserting *en* before *têi hypostasei*, and translating "we grasp time in its essential nature as around the activity of soul"), but the dative seems perfectly comprehensible ("by its very essence"), understanding *ekhein . . . peri* as "relates to" (cf. *LSJ ekhein* B4). For the thought, cf. III.7 [45], "On Eternity and Time," 13, 41–47.

15, 15–16 *But some of their experiences and actions are*: It is not quite clear from this how far Plotinus intends to distinguish the soul's *pathê* and *poiêmata* from its essence, as he would wish to do in the immediately preceding treatise III.6 [26] 1–5. There they are to be attributed rather to the "shadow" or "trace" (*ikhnos*) of soul than to the soul proper, which is to be impassible. There is certainly some distinction being made here, however, though not so clearly.

15, 19 *As he says*: The use of a simple *phêsi* to refer to Aristotle (or anyone else) rather than Plato is extremely unusual (only other example I.1 [53] 4, 26, a reference to *On the Soul* I 4, 408b29, but there the whole chapter has been focused on Aristotle). The reference here is to *Physics* IV 12, 221a18 and 28–30.

Chapter 16

The problem of temporality continued, with special reference to the consciousness of the successiveness of events, which produces the idea of "pastness," and so memory.

16, 1–17 Leading on from the end of the previous chapter, Plotinus continues the *aporia* by querying once again how, if one grants that the discursive mode of thought proper to soul (*dianoia* or *logismos*) involves successivity ("one thing after another," *tode meta tode*), one can avoid imputing to the soul in itself a consciousness of priority and posteriority in its productions (*ta poioumena*—picking up on *ta poiêmata* in line 17 of the previous chapter).

His answer is precisely to emphasize that distinction, between the soul itself and its productions. In the soul itself, its productions are still *logoi*, "reason-principles," present still in a non-extended, simultaneous mode (*hama*), even as hand and foot are still together in the *logos* of the individual animal, only to be separated out when it becomes a "production."

He now goes on to admit that at the level of pure Soul—the expression *ekei*, "there" (9), in this case must refer, not primarily to the intelligible realm, as it usually does, but rather to the level of pure Soul, in which the *logoi* reside—we do find priority and posteriority in

a certain mode, that of "otherness" (*heterotês*, 11), since a certain *logical* order among entities may still be observed, e.g., perhaps, in the *logos* of an animal, the heart would be "prior" to the hand or foot; or, in general, causal principles would be prior to their effects.

In this connection, though, Plotinus introduces a specification of some obscurity, in first postulating, and then denying, a distinction between an ordering agent (*to tatton*) and the resulting order (*taxis*). What has happened is that the Objector (as we may call him) has pitched in with the contention that you cannot have an order of priority and posteriority unless there is some agent there to do the ordering. This agent would inevitably be the soul, as distinct from the *logoi* within it, and it would be possessed of a consciousness that would have to recognize a sequence of prior and posterior events, and thus be liable to memory. But Plotinus does not want to concede a distinction between the soul and its *logoi*, any more than he would between Intellect and the Forms that are its contents. The result is that the *taxis* itself acts as its own ordering principle, and the whole process is more automatic and less conscious than it would be if there were a separate prescribing principle. Once more, then, the need for memory is obviated.

16, 6 *All the reason-principles are there simultaneously, as has been said*: that is, in 11, 26–27 above, where Plotinus speaks

of "a single rational principle and all together" (*hena logon kai homou panta*).

16, 17–31 But the *aporia* is not quite over. How, after all, the Objector pursues, can the ordering principle be the *same* as its order, in the sense of a blueprint? Because, insists Plotinus, at this level there is no distinction between form and matter, in such a way that the ordering principle would have a "material" substratum to bring to order; there is merely the form and its creative potency (*dynamis*)—and proceeding from this, the "secondary actualization" (*energeia deutera*) which is pure Soul. Here, however, the recurring ambiguity that is observable in this part of the work between Intellect and the highest level of Soul manifests itself again: for Plotinus' remark here, that Soul is an "activity" or "actualization" *after Intellect* (*meta noun*), would seem to imply that the ordering principle (*to tatton*) is actually Intellect. And of course in a way it is, as Intellect is the source of the Forms, which manifest themselves in Soul as *logoi*, which at the highest level of Soul are characterized by very much the same sort of "simultaneity" as is proper to the Forms; only when the *logoi* are further projected onto the physical world, the world of "things" (*pragmata*, ll. 19–20), do we come up against the phenomenon of "one thing after another." But Plotinus is not making things easy for us.

Nor does he make things particularly easy for us in the imagery with which he closes the chapter, that of the circle or circles centering around a point. In the first

instance, we are presented with the image of a particular type or level of soul which is "something noble" (*semnon ti* l. 20)—presumably pure Soul, that aspect which is most immediately in touch with Intellect—as forming the circle around the center, and being described as "an interval without extension" (*diastêma adiastaton*), an appellation more appropriate, one would think, to eternity than to a temporal entity such as Soul (cf. e.g. I.5.7, 24–27); but then Plotinus complicates the scenario by introducing the Good, or the One, and postulating that as the center, with Intellect surrounding it as a circle, but a motionless or static circle, while Soul surrounds that, in turn, as a circle in motion, impelled by desire (*ephesis*, sc. for the Good). And then the image is extended in the other direction, to embrace also the sphere of the universe (*hê tou pantos sphaira*), being the living body of the immanent World Soul, which also revolves, impelled by desire. Suddenly we are presented with a panorama of the whole Plotinian universe, portrayed as a series of concentric circles, with the problem of memory temporarily forgotten.

Chapter 17

Why it is that the intellections and reasonings of embodied souls are involved in temporal succession, and are not of the same nature as those of the pure Soul.

17, 1–19 Plotinus now embarks on a description of the unsatisfactory nature of embodied consciousness, a critique that finds an echo in many other parts of his work (e.g. VI.8 [39] 1–4, in the context of determining "what is in our power"). It is a condition of being in the body that we are assailed from without by a succession of distinct impressions and sensations, constituting "controlling elements" (*arkhai*) in conflict with one another, and over which we have little or no control. In particular (11ff.), the lower two of the three "parts" or levels of our souls, the desiring (*epithymêtikon*) and the spirited (*thymos*), being neither of them properly rational, are each in thrall to the *phantasiai* that assail them, which drive them in different directions, and so set up a fragmented sequence of contradictory impressions. This is not helped by "ignorance of goods" (*agnoia tôn agathôn*) on the part of the highest element in the soul, if it is not well-ordered; this may lead to its being drawn in different directions—an interesting acknowledgement here that the reason may well find itself the servant of the passions!

17, 10 *And get in the way of the movements*: The term *empodious* here seems to recall *Phaedo* 65a, where the body "gets in the way of" (*empodion*) the attainment of wisdom, and 66c, where diseases "hinder" (*empodizousin*) us in our pursuit of true Being.

17, 19–35 Plotinus now raises the question whether it is appropriate to postulate that "the best part of us" (*to beltiston*)—by which he must, I think, in the context mean the "undescended" part of the rational soul—ever entertains a variety of opinions (*alla doxazei*). His answer is that such variation, or vacillation, belongs rather to "the compound," *to koinon*—one of his two terms (the other being *to synamphoteron*, the "both-together") for the soul-body complex. Being associated immanently with the body and the physical world produces an inevitable "weakening" of the reason, so that it cannot maintain complete control of the whole soul.

To illustrate this, Plotinus now produces one of his notable "dynamic images," this time a political one, portraying an unruly democratic assembly, progressively being brought to order. As is suggested by Armstrong *ad loc.*, this portrayal of democratic unruliness is hardly taken from Plotinus' own personal experience as a citizen of the later Roman Empire, but rather from literary sources, such as, notably, Plato's portrayal of the democratic regime in *Republic* VIII 557aff. However, local politics in Alexandria could get quite heated, even in the later Empire, and Plotinus may have witnessed both disorderly and comparatively orderly political gatherings there in his younger days. We find very similar imagery at VI.4 [22] 15, 23–32, where Plotinus presents the picture of an unruly crowd clamoring for food before a group of elders who remain

calm, until a more prudent figure makes himself heard, and restores order. Here, however, we have also the portrayal of a succession of constitutions, rising from disorderly democracy, through moderate democracy which recognizes the rule of law—representing the "middling" (*mesos*) sort of man; to aristocracy—representing the "better" type (*beltiôn*); and finally the rule of the best, where we find a type of philosopher-king, entirely transcending what is below him, and so generating a sort of "two-tier" city, the lower level being ordered on the model of the higher, but by contemplating it, rather than by being directly administered by it. Certainly the imagery of *Republic* VIII may be discerned behind all this, with the highest city and its ruler loosely modelled on the ideal city of the central books. Plotinus' concerns, however, are only marginally political; he is firmly focused on the structure of the individual soul.

17, 35–38 Plotinus now briefly sums up what he feels he has been discussing over the last few chapters, the contrast between the World Soul, which is characterized above all by unity, and individual souls, which are troubled to various degrees by their diversity. It is notable that the discussion of memory as such has been subordinated in Plotinus' mind to this other, broader topic.

Fifth Problem: The Joint Activities of Body and Soul (chs. 18–29)

In this section of the work, Plotinus, having surveyed all the higher states and types of soul, under the rubric of investigating the nature of memory and its proper subject, now turns to the question of the soul's presence in the body, and more specifically, the question of what it is that is the subject of the emotions, such as pleasure and pain, desire and anger—involving also a protracted digression (chs. 22–27) on the presence or otherwise of sense-perception in the souls of the earth and of the heavenly bodies.

Chapter 18

The nature of the animate body examined.

18, 1–36 The question that Plotinus raises here is one that has arisen incidentally at earlier points in this treatise (e.g. 3.19; 25–26; 4.14), and in the immediately preceding treatise III.6.1–5, and which is of particular interest to him, viz., whether we need to postulate a distinct level of soul—or, as he would prefer to term it, a "shadow" (*skia*) or "trace" (*ikhnos*) of soul—proper to the living body, and

not simply part of the universal growth-soul infusing the physical world, itself a lower emanation of the World Soul, which he terms *physis*, or Nature, such as to be the proper subject of the emotions, and of "raw" sense-perceptions.

18, 1–19 Plotinus here once again (cf. ch. 14 above) makes use of the contrast between air that is lighted (sc. by the sun) and air that is warmed (sc. by a fire). In the first case, when the source of light is removed, the air is immediately deprived of light; in the latter case, however, if the source of heat is removed or quenched, the warmth remains in the air for an appreciable time. It is this latter situation that presents an analogy, Plotinus argues, to the state of the body after both the individual soul proper and "nature" have departed from it; the body does not go completely dead immediately, but some heat remains in it for a while, and certain bodily functions, such as, for instance, the growth of nails and hair, do not immediately cease. Plotinus sees this as evidence for the presence of a third element making up the living body, or the "commonality" (*koinon* or *synamphoteron*), and it is this that is the proper subject both of sense-impressions and of the emotions that supervene upon them. In this connection, Plotinus makes a distinction (11ff.) between "we ourselves" (*hêmeis*) and "what is ours" (*hêmôn*), the former referring to the soul proper, which is not directly affected by passions or sense-perceptions, but merely notes them dispassionately, when they are passed

on to it by the emanation of soul, or "trace." Nonetheless, he concedes, we are inevitably *concerned* (*melei*, 16) with "what is ours," that is, the ensouled body, or the body "so-qualified" (*toionde*), and the more so the "weaker" we are—that is, the weaker the conscious link between our "normal" consciousness and our "higher," undescended soul. These relations of the self with what is below it and above it is something that he will explore more thoroughly in the late treatise I.1 [53]: "On what is the Living Being and what is the Man."

18, 4–5 *Namely nature*: Some editors, following Kirchhoff, propose excising *hê physis* at the end of the sentence as a gloss, but it seems quite acceptable, as an emphatic repetition. In any case, "nature" here refers to the lower element of the World Soul, which, as we have seen, pervades all animate, or organic, beings in the universe, constituting a kind of "preliminary outline" (*prohypographê*) of the soul proper, as Plotinus puts it in VI.7 [38] 7, 13ff.

18, 7 *Has something like a shadow of a soul*: Here Plotinus uses *skia*, "shadow," with a qualifying *hoion*, "as it were," for what he otherwise terms "trace" (*ikhnos*, *indalma*), trying thus to characterize an entity that is not really an entity, but which is nonetheless central to his theory of the emotions and of sense-perception. The neuter plural *ekhonta* here has caused suspicion, but can be taken as a

sense construction, Plotinus thinking of the body of the animal and of the plant as distinct from one another.

18, 11 *The rest of the soul*: By this Plotinus means the soul proper, which he will distinguish below (19, 5–7) into sense-perceptive and rational levels, but here simply contrasts as a whole with the "trace."

18, 18 *As it were*, *submerge ourselves into it*: This use of *eisduomai* occurs also earlier, at 3.13, 10, to characterize the soul's descent into a body.

18, 19–36 His conclusion is that the emotions being here discussed do not belong either to the soul in itself or to the inanimate body, as these are each *simple* entities. The emotions are characteristic rather of a composite entity, such as is the living body—or, as he likes to term it, "the body so-qualified." This leads him to propound a remarkable theory of the origin of pleasure and pain, as the results of tensions set up consequent on the attempt at union between two disparate entities, viz., soul and body. The body yearns to be united with the soul, but the most that it can achieve is to take on a "trace" of it, and the extent to which it can achieve even that is insecure. The consequence of its connection with the soul weakening—its being "borne down"—is what we call "pain" (*algêdôn*), while that of the connection strengthening—its being "borne

up"—is pleasure (*hêdonê*)—though here Plotinus forbears to mention this explicitly, merely characterizing it as its *desire for the association* (*ephesis tês koinônias*).

This remarkable "vertical" theory of pleasure and pain will be developed further in the next chapter. It may well be that Plotinus is taking his start from the theory of pain and pleasure set forth by Socrates in conversation with Protarchus in *Philebus* 31c–32b, presenting the breaking up of the harmony of elements or "humors" within the living body as resulting in the onset of pains (*algêdones*), and its subsequent restoration as resulting in pleasure, but if so, Plotinus is developing it in an interesting way, as Plato there is only envisaging the disruption and restoration of *bodily* harmony, whereas here we are concerned with the disruption of the connection between body and soul as the cause of pain.

18, 23 *It would not be itself that is being divided, but the unity in it*: This is a distinction of some obscurity. What Plotinus presumably means is that an inanimate body is a mere lump, and cannot be regarded as being subject to division as such; but one cannot be quite sure.

18, 32–33 *A transitory association which is not secure*: The adjective *epikêros*, here translated "transitory," is rather distinctive, and may be borrowed by Plotinus from the

pseudo-Platonic *Axiochus* (367b), where it is applied to human nature.

Chapter 19

Further development of the theory of pleasure and pain, and of the proper subject of the emotions.

19, 1–14 Plotinus now pursues his distinction between the actual emotion (*pathos*), which is the province of "the body so-qualified," or "trace" (*indalma*) of soul, and the "cognition" (*gnôsis*) of such emotion, which is the province rather of the "sensitive soul" (*aisthêtikê psykhê*), the "lowest" element of the soul proper, which Plotinus characterizes as being "adjacent" (*en têi geitoneiâi*) to the "trace," and which passes on the report of the emotion to the "ultimate recipient," which we must take to be the rational soul, or *logismos*.

In order to appreciate the subtlety of Plotinus' distinctions here, we may once again resort to an example. One's finger sustains a cut. This is felt as a pain by the ensouled body, or trace of soul. But it is only *cognized* as a pain by the lowest level of soul, which then passes on the information to the higher soul, which reflects (dispassionately), "Damn!

I've cut my finger. That was stupid" (if we may postulate here a "Damn!" of dispassionate disapproval). There are thus three distinct levels involved in the reception of an emotion, or indeed of a sense-perception, and the upper two are strictly "passion-free" (*apatheis*): this is an important feature of Plotinus' theory of the soul—the impassibility of the soul proper.

19, 15–29 Plotinus now develops his argument against the soul itself being affected. If the soul itself were affected, he maintains, since it is an immaterial entity, and is everywhere simultaneously in the body (cf. the extended discussion of its omnipresence in VI.4 [22]), it would not be able to discern *where* the pain was, but only that it was in pain. It is only because the trace of soul in the animate body suffers the initial trauma that the pain can be localized. Also, the trauma only generates a conscious pain when the *aisthêtikê psykhê* takes note of it—necessarily without suffering the pain itself, because then it would become confused as to the source of the pain, and become a "bad messenger," no longer able to present a reliable report.

19, 21–22 *As we say that the man is "gray"*: *Glaukos* can in fact mean "gray" or "light blue"; it hardly matters which alternative one chooses. This is not an analogy that works well in English, but we may take Plotinus' word for it that it works in Greek. In fact, we find Herodotus, in *Histories*

4. 108, speaking of a Scythian tribe (*ethnos*), the Boudinoi, who were *glaukon kai pyrrhon*—"gray (or blue)-eyed and red-haired"; and Euripides in the *Children of Heracles* 754 has the Chorus refer to Athena as *glauka*, rather than the more normal *glaukôpis*, so it is well enough attested.

Chapter 20

Plotinus passes to a consideration of the nature and proper seat of desires, in what sense they belong to the animate body, and in what sense to the soul proper.

20, 1–20 Turning now to the analysis of the nature of desires (*epithymiai*), we must recognize that there is a corporeal element in them, that is, that they are based in "the body so-qualified"—a body, he says (l. 6), that "wants to be not just body," and in the process of aspiring to be soul-like, acquires a multiplicity of movements (*kinêseis*) much greater than those of the soul proper, in that it is having to chase after various types of opposite, such as sweet or salt, hot or cold, which the soul proper is not concerned with. Plotinus now traces the desire upward, from the basic urge generated by the animate body, to what he calls the "clearly-defined desire" (*tranê epithymia*) characteristic of the level of nature, or the "trace" of nature (see below),

and so to an image (*phantasia*), sc. of the object of desire, produced by the sense-perceptive soul. This *phantasia*, finally, is considered by the rational soul, which either accepts it or rejects it.

20, 4 *The beginning of appetition and wanting*: Plotinus here conjoins the terms *orexis and prothymia*, the latter of which he is going to mention again at the end of the chapter (35) in a more technical, not to say *punning*, sense, such as is not present here.

20, 10 *If it were on its own*: That is to say, if it were inanimate.

20, 15 *The soul close to it, which we call nature*: This is distinctly confusing. Either Plotinus is being inconsistent in his terminology, or "the soul close to" sense-perception (*aisthêsis*)—by which he presumably means the sense-perceptive soul—has to refer to that lower aspect of the World Soul (= Nature) that infuses all living things. But this is described as providing the animate body with a "trace" (*ikhnos*) of itself, which is otherwise what we are led to believe is done rather by the individual soul. However, since from what follows it becomes plain that it is in fact Nature that is being referred to, we must accept that Plotinus envisages it as also providing a "trace" of itself, to blend with the trace emanating from the individual soul, and combining to animate the organic body.

20, 16 *The clearly-defined desire*: This is an attempt to translate the adjective *tranês*, which has the general meaning "clear" or "distinct"—in contrast here to the inarticulate desire generated by the animate body, e.g. for re-hydration; this is then "clarified" or "defined" as a desire for a drink of cold water. This in turn generates an image of water, either in a glass, or flowing from a spring, and this in its turn can be assented to or rejected (on prudential grounds) by the reason.

20, 20–36 Plotinus now allows an objector to raise the question as to why two distinct desires seems to be postulated here, the original bodily one, and a supervening psychic one. Why not just attribute the desire as a whole to the body so-qualified (*to sôma to toionde*)? In answer, Plotinus seeks to clarify the role of Nature in the management of the animate body. The desire arises in the body, but Nature, exercising a maternal role (*hôs mêtera*, 29), as being the agent that has molded and shaped the body in the first place, seeks to restore balance in its constitution by bringing about the fulfilment of the desire, and so passes the desire on to the "other" soul mentioned at the end of the chapter. In fact, then, one could be excused for discerning two desires here, the "pre-desire," as he calls it (34), arising in the body itself, and the fully articulated desire considered, and passed judgment on, by the rational soul; but Plotinus prefers to view it as a single desire, passing

through various stages. The subtlety of Plotinus' analysis here, in comparison to any previous surviving discussion, is, it must be said, truly remarkable.

20, 27 *As it strives for the opposites of what it is experiencing*: Plotinus here makes a textual reference to *Philebus* 35a2–4, showing that this section of that dialogue is very much in his mind (as remarked above; see note on 18.19–36).

20, 34–35 *One might perhaps call it "pre-desire" or "fore-desire"*: Plotinus here produces a remarkable coinage, *proepithymia* (though it should be noted that this is actually an emendation, albeit a most persuasive one, by Kleist, of the *prosepithymia* of the manuscripts) to characterize the inchoate, subconscious level of desire proper to the animate body itself, and follows this by what is in fact a quasi-punning, "etymological" version of the term *prothymia*—which normally just means "enthusiasm," or "wanting"—to mean something like "pre-spiritedness," presumably to represent an inchoate form of *thymos*, signifying "anger" or "indignation," corresponding to that of *epithymia* (though in fact he uses it just below, 21, 8, to mean simply "fore-desire"). One is put in mind of his similar "etymologizing" version of *pronoia*, to signify the "higher" anticipation of intellection present in the One, "pre-intellection," at VI.8.17, 4–10.

Chapter 21

A short appendix to the previous discussion, reinforcing the thesis that desires really belong to the "body so-qualified."

21, 1–14 In order to reinforce the argument that desire originates in the animate body, Plotinus now adduces certain observations about differences in the intensity of desire as between human beings of different ages, and as between the healthy and the sick, on the assumption that the desiring faculty (*to epithymêtikon*) is one and the same for all. What, though, are we to make of this "desiring faculty"? Plotinus uses the traditional Platonic terminology of the tripartite soul, according to which this is its lowest element, but the whole force of his argument has been that desire as such does not belong to the soul in itself at all, and in fact it does not suit Plotinus to adopt the traditional Platonic tripartite schema for the soul, as he does not, as we have seen, wish any part of the soul proper to be subject to passions. Therefore, the term *epithymêtikon* here must simply refer to the "faculty," or power, of desire infused into the animate being by Nature. This is assumed to be uniform for all, as generated by Nature, but to exhibit differences of intensity in accordance with the maturity or the state of health of the body concerned.

With that point established, Plotinus proceeds to reinforce it by pointing out that the body can experience what he terms "fore-desires" (*prothymiai*, cf. 20, 35 above) which do not in all cases attain the status of fully-conscious desires, if nature (which I think we must here understand as the "trace" of Nature in the individual combined with the "trace" of the soul proper) does not accept them and pass them on to the reason. It must be admitted that Plotinus is being even more obscure than usual here. We may, I think, however, posit the example of a "fore-desire" for, let us say, re-hydration, which fails to attain the status of a full desire because of being rejected by the organism's nature, which judges drinking—or at least drinking the water or other liquid available at this time—to be in some way contrary to Nature, so that a fully-fledged desire is never even presented to the reason. Do these remain, then, as subconscious desires? The scenario being posited is, as we say, obscure.

21, 8–9 *Though the bodily desire persists right through*: The exact meaning of this qualificatory remark (*eis telos tês sômatikês menousês*) is somewhat obscure. Marsilio Ficino, in his translation (*cum tamen corporea incitatio saepe ad finem usque perduret*), as noted by HS, understands it in this sense, namely that the fact that the desiring faculty rejects the validity of the desire does not mean that the body desists from its "fore-desire," and that seems reasonable.

21, 14–21 Plotinus now presents an interesting objection to the above scenario. One might argue, after all, that the body itself, in consequence of its altering states, and consequent needs, is sufficient to generate desires in the *epithymêtikon*, without the need to postulate a distinct faculty or power. Plotinus' response is obscure (as is much else in this short chapter), but the point he appears to be making is that, since the body itself cannot rule on the quality of its own desires, or "fore-desires," we need to assume some agency that is not itself affected, as he says, by the changes to which the body is subject, such as heating, cooling, emptying or filling, which can rule on the suitability, or accordance with nature, of the desires arising from them. This remains somewhat odd, though, as the desires adopted by the *epithymêtikon* are not yet properly rational; they have yet to be ratified by the *logismos*.

21, 19–21 *For certainly neither the nourishment*: Plotinus seems here to have in mind Plato's account in the *Timaeus* (64a–65b) of the genesis of pleasures and pains. Certainly, a number of the terms employed there appear here. In that connection, the phrase *oude kinêsis*, occurring in the manuscripts after "nor the moisture" (20), and excised, no doubt rightly, by Igal, can be seen as an "intelligent" gloss by a reader acquainted with this passage of the *Timaeus*, where some attention is paid to "motion," or motility, and the lack of it (cf. esp. 64bc).

Chapter 22

Is there anything in the soul of plants corresponding to the distinctions just made within the human soul? And what relation does such a soul have to the soul of the earth as a whole?

22, 1–5 Plotinus now slides off into a digression, extending for the next six chapters, into whether and how far the soul of the earth can experience sensations, provoked by a problem that occurs to him arising from his speculations as to the need to postulate a distinction between the inchoate impulses of desire arising in the living body itself and the "trace" of soul acting as a desiring faculty (*epithymêtikon*). The question is whether what he now characterizes as, not the "trace," but the "echo, as it were (*to hoion apêkhêthen*)" of soul present in plants needs to be distinguished into the echo itself and some other element that structures or organizes the echo (*to khorêgêsan*), which would serve as a kind of "higher" soul for them—the *epithymêtikon* in us being in them a vegetative faculty (*phytikon*); or is it better to postulate that their *phytikon* is actually based in the soul of the earth, with an emanation of that operating in each individual plant?

22, 1–2 *The echo, as it were, of soul in them*: The participial form used here, *enapêkhêthen* (from *enapêkhêo*, a compound

verb attested nowhere else), embodies the noun *êkhos*, "echo," adopted by Plotinus here, perhaps, as representing something even more insubstantial than a trace or shadow.

22, 5–27 What we have here, it must be said, is a pretty exotic speculation, but it leads Plotinus into a more general enquiry as to the nature of the soul of the earth. This turns into a rather more detailed analysis of such a soul than one finds elsewhere in the corpus—although the parallelism presented between our souls and the World Soul at the beginning of this treatise (3.1–8) suggests a complexity in the latter similar to the human soul. However, we must note here that the soul of the earth is not to be identified with the World Soul. What Plotinus wishes to claim here is that the earth, like the heavenly bodies, has its own soul, into the nature of which he is now enquiring. The World Soul is a more exalted entity, ensouling the whole physical universe, including the earth and the planets—though with its own "lower" immanent aspect, "Nature (*physis*)." There might, indeed, seem to be some danger of overlap between that aspect of the World Soul and the influences being postulated here as emanating from the earth soul into plants, but I think that Plotinus is keeping them separate in his mind.

In that connection, there is some irony (no doubt unintended!) in his complaint about Plato's lack of clarity on this issue (11–12), since Plato would have had no

conception of the complexities of cosmic psychology that Plotinus is postulating here. What Plato is presenting in the *Timaeus* is a World Soul (which is not distinguished, as it is by Plotinus, from a transcendent hypostasis Soul), and a multitude of individual human souls that mirror the structure of the World Soul, though in an unspecifiedly inferior mode (that being the point of the "second and third" pressings in the Mixing Bowl, at *Timaeus* 41d); he is not concerned with anything else.

With not much help from Plato, then, we must consider the probabilities. Plotinus now runs through the levels of soul, beginning from the lowest, the vegetative, arguing that we cannot conceive of the earth as not possessing each one of them, even intellect (*nous*), as do the stars. It will not do to say that it is held together by a soul that is external to it, since that is not the case with the stars, and if a soul can inhabit a fiery body, it can certainly do so in the case of an earthy one. One objection that might be made, he recognizes, is that the earth tends to immobility (*dyskinêton*, "difficult to move," is the term he uses, 26), and that would tell against its being ensouled, since soul is a principle of motion. His response is that this only relates to motion from place to place: the earth rotates in place—it does not move spatially, he might have added, because it is already in its proper place.

22, 6–12 *To which alone Plato seems to have given soul*: We find here an appeal to certain passages of the *Timaeus*, first (7) to 36e, where Plato is describing the process of the fitting of the body of the world into its soul, which then provides to it "a divine source of unending and rational life for all time," which Plotinus characterizes as "a kind of illumination (*hoion ellampsin*); and then 40c2, which he quotes verbatim as testimony to the high honor that Plato pays to the earth as a divinity.

22, 12 *And that the difficulty is increased*: For other (albeit mild and respectful) criticisms of Plato for obscurity or insufficient exactitude, cf. IV.8 [6] 1–2 (on whether or not embodiment is a good thing for the soul), and III.6 [26] 12 (on the impassibility or otherwise of matter). Plato's infallibility in general is axiomatic for Plotinus, but he does recognize on occasion that the great man is not always sufficiently perspicuous.

22, 17 *But if it is so large an animal*: As Brisson pertinently remarks (n. 191), this contradicts the view of Aristotle, as expressed in e.g. *On the Heavens* II 14, that the earth is of rather small dimensions as compared to the rest of the universe.

22, 20 *Since it is part of whole Living Being*: That is to say, the Essential Living Being of *Timaeus* 39e, which

is the paradigm of the physical world contemplated by the Demiurge (interpreted by Plotinus as the contents of Intellect).

22, 25–26 *And if it is said that it is resistant to movement*: This issue is raised again in 26, 9 below, the term *dyskinêton* being used once again.

22, 27–47 Plotinus now turns to the question, raised by the assertion above as to the presence of every level of soul in the earth, as to how the earth could indulge in sense-perception, granted that it has no suitable organs (eyes, ears, nose, etc.)—any more than do the heavenly bodies—for exercising such perceptions. Plotinus adopts a perhaps unexpected, and yet quite characteristic, response to this problem, viewing things, as usual, from the top down. The soul, he asserts, does not need to be provided with a body in order to perceive; it is rather the body that needs the soul, to exist at all. The soul, when considering the body with which it is associated, makes a judgment as to whether or not that body specifically requires sense-perception. In the case of the earth, what need, we may ask, would it have of any of the senses? There is no information that it seeks, such as any sense-organ could provide it with—nor, he might have added, is there any external danger from which it has to defend itself.

He then raises the interesting point that some perceptions, in the case of human percipients at any rate, have purely aesthetic or intellectual value, over and above any usefulness (*khreia*) they may have, and one would not want to deny the earth the benefit of those. However, he leaves this thought hanging in the air for the moment, promising to return to it (which he does shortly, in ch. 24), and returns to the problem of whether one can have sense-perceptions without sense-organs. This he promises to follow with the question as to whether sense-perceptions have merely practical usefulness, or something more.

22, 30 *So that the body may exist and be preserved in existence*: This role would be most properly assigned to the vegetative soul emanating from the World Soul, or Nature, but here seems to be credited to soul in general. The latter phrase, (*hina*) . . . *sôizoito to soma*, "so that . . . the body may be preserved in existence," embodies a pun on *sôizo* and *sôma* borrowed from Plato's *Cratylus*, 400c.

22, 37 *For the power of thinking is presumably sufficient*: There is a textual problem here, the word *gnôsis*, "knowledge," following *isôs* (here translated "presumably") in the manuscripts, but this is doubtless a gloss on the whole phrase *hê tou phronein* <***>, the missing word being credibly supplied by Cilento as *dynamis*, "power."

22, 39–41 *There is a kind of cognition in the area of sense-objects*: Plotinus may be thinking, at least partly, of Plato's commendation of sight at *Timaeus* 47a-b as our means of induction into philosophy, by allowing us to contemplate all the phenomena of the heavens. The use of the phrase *ouk amousos*, here translated "quite intellectually enjoyable," though normal enough Greek, may yet be borrowed from such a Platonic passage as *Phaedrus* 240b3.

22, 42–44 *Now we must again ask*: He returns to this question, in fact, only in ch. 26, 5–29.

Chapter 23

Can one have sense-perception without the appropriate organs?

23, 1–13 Plotinus begins with an analysis of sense-perception, with some reference back to the distinctions made in his earlier treatment of the subject in III.6.4. The soul, he points out, despite its capacity for understanding (*antilêpsis*), without the instrumentality of sense-organs, can only ever cognize intelligible objects. He adduces the analogies of a point's incompatibility with a line (since no amount of points can ever make up a line), or, more starkly, that of an intelligible line with a sensible one; and

lastly, that of the intelligible form of fire or man with the sensible individual fire or man. None of these can make contact without some sort of mediating entity, specifically something that can receive sense-impressions and process them in such a way as to be cognized, and judged upon, by the soul. The case of the first example is admittedly somewhat different: what is needed for the progression from an extensionless point to a line is something like the postulation of the "minimal line," such as proposed back in the Old Academy by Xenocrates—the point is two-dimensional, but not an intelligible entity.

23, 13–32 Soul, then, by itself, cannot grasp sensible objects as such. Plotinus now, to reinforce his point, produces the scenario of viewing a physical object from a distance, when the soul is able to make out the simple shape, say, of a cow—that is, can cognize the embodied *form* of a cow—but only when coming closer can see the color and the details of the cow. The point of this image may seem rather obscure, but what he wants to assert, we think, is that soul by itself could not take in these details. For that we need to postulate some mediating entity, which is such as to be affected (*to peisomenon*, 20); without this the soul, being impassible, cannot take in colours and shapes. What Plotinus would seem to be calling for is nothing other than the "pneumatic vehicle" (*pneumatikon okhêma*), a mediating entity adopted by certain Middle

Platonists, such as Albinus, Atticus, and Galen, and by later Platonists from Iamblichus on, but not favoured by him, for reasons as to which one can only speculate (cf. Dillon 2013). Most probably, he regarded the "vehicle," by reason of its being composed of *pneuma*, as being an excessively materialist entity—too close to Stoicism—and preferred his own concept of the "shadow" or "trace" of soul. This, he feels, is better fitted to be a "mean proportional" (*meson analogon*, 26–27) between the physical world and soul. It is "both able to receive and to report" (*dektikon hama kai apangeltikon*, 28).

23, 21–22 *And it must share the affections of the objects and have similar affections*: These phrases translate the Greek adjectives *sympathes kai homoiopathes*, the former referring to the intermediate entity's capacity to receive the sense-impressions, the latter to its capacity to process them and relay them to the soul.

23, 26–27 *A mean proportional* (meson analogon): That is to say, for example, 4 as a mean between 2 and 8. Of course, that is only a superficial analogy, as the *ikhnos* of soul is required to be a mean between the material and the immaterial—a far more serious proposition.

23, 32–49 Plotinus here returns to a position that he propounded earlier, in 3.23, concerning the necessity for

bodily organs, either specialized ones, or (in the case of touch) the body as a whole, for the achievement of sense-perception on the part of the soul. He now adduces the analogy of an artificial tool (*organon*), such as a ruler or straight-edge (*kanôn*, 40), which, when laid alongside a plank of wood, for example, can (via the vegetative soul, of course) stimulate the soul proper to contemplate the Form of Straightness within itself, and relate it to the straightness of the plank, drawing a suitable conclusion. Things become more complex, he notes, when the object is at some distance from the organ, such as in the case of sight—or indeed the sense of touch, in respect of a fire at some distance, but he decides to postpone such issues for the moment.

23, 47–48 *Matter for another discussion*: That is to say, IV.5, which is really an appendix to the present discussion, as indicated by Plotinus at the beginning of that treatise.

Chapter 24

A return to the issue raised, and postponed, at the end of ch. 22, whether sense-perception has solely utilitarian purposes.

24, 1–39 Plotinus is raising quite a subtle point here, analogous to one raised at the beginning of VI.7 [38] as regards the granting of sense-organs to souls by the Demiurge. There Plotinus makes the point that the addition of sense-organs to the soul for the purpose of functioning in a body, since these would be an addition to the soul, would appear as a sort of afterthought, consequent on embodiment, which would thus imply that the soul had been brought to completion for the purpose of being in a worse state:

"But he either gave the organs to souls that already had the powers or gave both at once. But if he gave the senses also, then, although they were souls before, they did not have sense-perception; but if they had sense-perception before when they came into being as souls, and came into being that they might go to birth, then going to birth was connatural (*symphyton*) to them. So it would be against nature for them to be away from birth and in the intelligible, and they would actually have been made in order to belong to something else and to be in evil." (1.14–19, trans. Armstrong)

Plotinus' conclusion is that the souls must have had some transcendental equivalent of sense-perception built into their natures before descending, if we are to avoid the conclusion that they have been created only to exist in a worse state. Here his argument is somewhat different. He appeals to the idea that sense-perception may have a higher, aesthetic or intellectual purpose, as well as a purely practical

one, to argue that a soul in a body not faced with external dangers or enemies, and so with no need for sense-organs for self-defence, as is the case both for the heavenly bodies and the earth, might yet be endowed with a generalized *aisthêsis*. In either case, though, his concern appears to be the same, to deny that the soul acquires the senses as a sort of "add-on" for the purpose of existing in a "worse" state, viz., in the physical world. The upshot is that there is no reason why the soul of the earth should not enjoy a generalized form of sense-perception.

24, 14 *And indeed the whole heavens and the cosmos*: Here, interestingly, the enquiry is extended also to the soul of the cosmos as a whole, which had been relegated to the background for a while. In fact, however, the question as to the enjoyment of sense-perception applies equally well to the World Soul.

24, 20–21 *It would not have one part through which sense-perception takes place*: This is indeed a difficulty for the crediting of sense-perception, especially to the World Soul, but also to the soul of the earth. Plotinus gets around it by appealing to the phenomenon of self-consciousness (*synaisthêsis*), which involves the apprehension of internal processes—though in the case of the World Soul, and of the souls of the cosmic bodies, this should not involve emotion of any sort.

24, 26–27 *What is there to stop the world seeing the moving sphere*: This is a curious notion, surely, that the World Soul might utilize the unmoved sphere (*aplanês*), or sphere of the fixed stars, to view the sphere of the planets, and that in turn to view the earth; but that is what Plotinus seems to be envisaging here. Since the heavenly spheres are replete with light, Plotinus, with a nod to the description of the eyes in the *Timaeus* (45b), may be characterizing them as the internal "eyes" of the World Soul.

24, 34–35 "*But*," *he says*, "*it had no need of eyes*": Plotinus now adduces a passage of the *Timaeus* (33c1–2), where Plato does indeed argue against the need of the world as a whole for eyes, ears, or any other organ of sense, as an objection to the notion that the World Soul might possess eyes. He takes this on board, but does not regard this as precluding the possibility that it possesses *internal* "eyes," such eyes not being used for any practical, defensive purpose, but simply for aesthetic reasons, for the enjoyment of its own beauty.

24, 38–39 *Why would not such a body, translucent as it is, have the capacity of seeing?*: This question, one would think, could only meaningfully apply to the World Soul as a whole, as the earth is surely not "translucent" (*diaphanes*), nor yet are the heavenly bodies, fiery though they may be. However, as will emerge from the last section of ch. 26 (23–31), Plotinus is prepared to regard the vegetative

power (*phytikon*) present in the earth as a *pneuma*, and thus *diaphanes*. But that can be discussed more fully in the relevant place.

Chapter 25

Further investigation of the purpose of the earth or heavenly bodies having senses.

25, 1–11 The previous chapter ended with a question, and this short chapter essays an answer to it. First of all, however, Plotinus wishes to specify that, even assuming the presence of a medium for sense-perception, it is not to be supposed that a soul whose attention is permanently directed at what is above it—as would be the case with the hypostasis Soul, or indeed the higher aspect of the World Soul—would make any use of such a medium to contemplate its own contents. In this connection, Plotinus once again makes some contribution to the theory of attention (7–8); cf. note on 8.1–7 above. He is fully aware of the mind's ability to screen out items in the visual field that are not judged to be relevant in the given context. He also adduces the interesting point that, if we are looking at ourselves in the mirror, let us say, we are not necessarily concerned

to examine particular *parts* of ourselves—our left ear, for example—unless we have some particular concern with them. He then makes the further point that the whole idea of contemplating the *beauty* of something else connotes a certain degree of dependency on that thing, which is not proper to the World Soul, or indeed to the earth or any of the celestial bodies—perhaps drawing here, to some extent, on Plato's suggestion, in the *Lysis* (216c–218c) and in the *Symposium* (200a–c), that love for the beautiful implies a certain degree of neediness and imperfection in the lover.

25, 11–17 As for all the other senses, from hearing on down, the case is the same, to an even greater extent. Unless exercised only incidentally (*kata symbebêkos*), they would encroach upon the sublime self-sufficiency of the major cosmic bodies. But then the thought obtrudes itself—in anticipation of chs. 30–45 below—that the heavenly bodies, if they are presumed to pay any attention to human affairs, would need to do so through the exercise of at least the senses of sight and hearing; and if indeed they respond to mortal prayers, and thus perform good deeds, how can we imagine that they do not have memory of such deeds? But that would seem to cut across Plotinus' earlier argument against the presence of memory in the heavenly bodies, in chs. 6–8 above. This question obviously needs further investigation, which it receives in the next chapter.

25, 12–13 *Encumbrances and disturbances of the soul*: The term *peristasis*, here translated "encumbrance," is a term borrowed from Stoic theory (e.g. *SVF* 1. 361; 3. 416), indicating a circumstance that necessitates the activation of one virtue or another (which one would ideally prefer not to have to exercise!). The noun *perihelkysmos*, "disturbance," lit. "being dragged around," seems to occur only here, but Plotinus may be influenced by a memory of Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* VII 3, 1145b27, where the verb *perihelkein* is used, in reference to Socrates' objection to the idea that, if one possesses knowledge, one can allow the soul to be "dragged about like a slave" by the passions.

25, 15–16 *If one suggests that they direct themselves to sense-objects*: The verb *epistrephesthai*, "direct one's attention," in Plotinus more usually connotes attention to what is above one—especially of an hypostasis' *epistrophê* to its source (e.g. IV.8.4, 28)—or to oneself (e.g. of Intellect to itself at V.3.1, 4), but here it is used of the heavenly bodies' attention to human problems (cf. also V.8.11, 7; and earlier in the treatise, 3.12, 30).

Chapter 26

Further discussion of the possible uses of sensation by the soul of the earth.

26, 1–4 Plotinus' main concern here is to explore further the problems surrounding the exercise of sense-perception by the earth soul, but first he wishes to say a little more, in anticipation of the final *aporia* raised in the treatise, concerning the mode in which the heavenly bodies might hearken to human prayers, and indeed to the incantations of magicians. His solution is the postulation of cosmic sympathy, about which we will hear much more later. Here he speaks of "a kind of connection . . . and sort of relationship" (*kata hoion synapsin kai kata toiande skhesin*), and of certain powers that the magicians can draw on "that follow according to the rules of sympathy" (*hepomenais sympathôs*).

26, 3 *In the arts of magicians also*: For an exposition of Plotinus' theory of magic, see chs. 40 and 43–44 below. They are experts at utilizing the channels already existing by virtue of *sympatheia* between the "higher" and "lower" parts of the physical universe.

26, 5–17 Plotinus now turns back to the question of the type of sense-perception to be accorded to the earth soul. What emerges is that there is no difficulty, or much less difficulty, about granting it *internal* sensitivity, and consciousness of its own parts and powers. In fact, Plotinus' theorizing here brings him close to modern Gaia theory—see e.g. the works of James Lovelock, such as *Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth* (1979), or *The Ages of Gaia: A Biography*

of our Living Earth (1988); in fact, Plotinus ends the next chapter by identifying the earth-soul with Hestia or Demeter! For such a theorist as Lovelock, Gaia is a living, self-regulating system that has a certain consciousness of the "steady state," or homoeostasis, that it has attained, and will take steps to preserve itself against threats to that—including, it may be, man-made global warming. Similarly, for Plotinus, the earth soul is in touch with itself—it enjoys a sort of internal *haphê*, by which reports on the disposition of its elements—Plotinus mentions in particular fire (8)—are sent up to what Plotinus terms "the controlling part" (*hêgoumenon*, a variant of the normal Stoic term *hêgemonikon*), and duly processed, thus implying a degree of consciousness.

Such perceptions, Plotinus goes on to specify (9ff.), will be only of "big things." It is not entirely clear what he means by that, but we may suppose such phenomena as earthquakes, and major floods or droughts. Once again, the parallelism with Gaia theory is not far to seek: Gaia is only concerned with significant threats to its homoeostasis. Its perceptions, he argues, may very well be directed toward the advancement of human welfare (here the concept of cosmic sympathy is once again introduced), and it may even respond, in its own way, to human prayers (let us imagine, for instance, generating rain after a long drought).

26, 8–9 *After all, even if its body is difficult to move, nonetheless it is not immovable*: Note once again (cf. 22, 25–27 above) the insistence that the earth is not necessarily immobile (which would militate against its being ensouled), even if it does not move very readily.

26, 17–29 Plotinus now goes on to speculate as to whether the earth may have a sense of smell, for the purpose of identifying juices that may be useful in generating fruits, flowers, and vegetables, albeit without possessing an identifiable nose (he here contributes the acute observation that there are animals that can hear without having visible ears). This reflection leads in turn to a further speculation on the earth's power of sight, which incorporates the adoption of yet another Stoic concept, that of the "life-spirit," or *pneuma*, which for the Stoics manifests itself at various levels in the physical creation, as *hexis*, or the principle of cohesion, in inanimate objects, as *physis*, or the vegetative force, in plants, and as *psykhê*, or soul, in animals (cf. *SVF* 2. 716; 3. 370). For the Stoics, such *pneuma* is translucent (*diaphanes*), and if it receives light from the heavenly bodies, becomes so *in actuality* (*energeiâi*)—and so, Plotinus argues, it can be seen by the earth soul!

26, 29–31 Lastly, Plotinus argues that this soul, being the soul of a noble body, must be a god. If one puts this together with his earlier remark at 22, 18, one must conclude that

being a god implies being an intellect, though he does not choose to specify that here, simply remarking that its soul must be always good—meaning, presumably, that it always acts for the overall benefit of its nurselings, including its human inhabitants.

Chapter 27

Conclusion of the digression on the question as to whether the earth possesses sense-perception, and therefore a soul.

27, 1–17 Plotinus returns now to the original *aporia* which led to this digression in ch. 22: is the structuring element of the soul in plants a distinct "echo" of soul in the individual plant, or does it rather come to them from the earth soul? This has led to a protracted and acute analysis of what we can reasonably postulate about the sense-perceptive and other powers of an earth soul, an enquiry which he rounds off here. What he settles on as emanating from the earth soul to all plants is that which differentiates the living plant from a dead one, one that has been uprooted, or cut from its base.

This leads him to speculate as to what the soul of the earth bestows upon the body of the earth in general.

He wishes to claim that in fact the earth soul pervades all of the earth, including even stones, so that "every part of earth has a trace (*ikhnos*) of soul, and the whole vegetative soul (*to pan phytikon*) runs over this." This "whole vegetative soul" will be the core entity that gives off "echoes" or "traces" of itself to individual living things.

However, we must also postulate higher levels of soul, beginning with the sensitive soul proper, which, in the case of the earth soul as of our individual souls, is regarded by Plotinus as distinct from the basic vegetative power of the body, as being part (albeit the lowest part) of the soul proper. These questions have already been discussed above, in 3.27–31, and that discussion is assumed here. Above the sensitive soul, Plotinus now mentions explicitly the intellective level of the earth soul, which he declares that men call Hestia (properly the goddess of the hearth) and Demeter—here imposing his own more elaborate interpretation on traditional Greek usage, which would not have made any distinction between the intellect of the earth and lower levels of earth soul.

27, 3 *And the one in plants is a trace of this one*: Here Plotinus uses his usual term for the lower emanation of the soul proper into body for the similar (though "horizontal") emanation of the vegetative power of the earth soul. At the beginning of this digression, we may recall (22, 1), he had characterized it as an "echo."

27, 9–10 *As is shown by stones*: This is a very odd belief, but one widely shared, if one may so judge from Strabo, *Geography*, V 2, 6, where, apropos a remarkable iron mine on the island of Elba, he tells a tale of various mines and quarries the contents of which are reported to have "grown again" after being mined. Plotinus makes use of this belief also at VI.7 [38] 11, 15–36, a most interesting discussion of the ensoulment of the earth, parallel to this one.

27, 14 *Which is no longer "mixed up* (sympephyrmenê) *with" body*: Plotinus here makes interesting use of a phrase from Plato's *Phaedo* (66b5), where Plato is in fact talking of the soul as a whole being "mixed up with" the body during life, without any suggestion of the complexities of Plotinus' theory. The verb he uses for its actual relation to the body, *epokheisthai*, "ride on top of," is a favored term of his for the sort of transcendental contact that a higher principle in his system will have with a lower (cf. e.g. I.1.8, 9; II.5.5, 10; and earlier in this treatise, 3.7, 17, and 3.31, 16).

27, 16 *Hestia and Demeter*: This pair of goddesses is mentioned once again, at 30.19 below, as representations of the earth soul in its highest aspect, in connection with the bestowal of benefits on mortals.

Chapter 28

Return to the main subject of discussion, namely the parts played by body and soul respectively in the desires and passions. Plotinus now turns to an examination of the nature of thymos, *here rendered "spiritedness," but also frequently translatable as "anger."*

28, 1–18 Plotinus, having settled earlier (chs. 19–21) that the origin and seat of the passions or emotions is properly the vegetative force in the living body, now turns to the question of what in "traditional" Platonic theory would be the "middle part" of the soul, the *thymos*, or *thymoeides.* The problem of the correct translation of *thymos* is considerable. For Plato, it covers a range of emotions, from raw anger to moral indignation in the face of injustice or disgraceful behavior, and that can put it into opposition to the impulses of the desiring faculty, and into alliance with the reason, which is why Plato in the *Republic* wished to recognize it as a distinct "part" of the soul. Plotinus fully recognizes this complexity, as we shall see, but for the moment he is concerned to enquire whether we can posit the same origin for anger as for pleasure and pain. The first point that he raises here is whether it is simply the living body, or a part of it, such as the heart, in a certain state, that produces anger, or whether there needs to be input from the "trace" of soul (*to ikhnos to psykhikon*)—or

indeed, he speculates, might *thymos* actually be the *ikhnos*? Desire certainly seems to originate from the vegetative force, arising as it does from the whole body (though admittedly focused on the liver, as specified by Plato at *Timaeus* 71a–72c); *thymos* seems somehow different.

28, 13–15 *We did not mention the origin of the desire for sex*: In a sort of footnote, Plotinus recognizes that the sexual urge (*ta aphrodisia*) appears to be an exception to his assertion about the universality of desire within the body, but this does not appear to bother him much: "let us assume that it is in the parts which fulfil the desire." Desire as a whole, after all, is asserted to be focused on the liver; if one class of desires is concentrated in the sexual organs, that does not make much difficulty for his theory.

28, 18–47 What, then, is *thymos*? If we agree that its activity is particularly focused on the heart, or the blood around the heart, we may still ask if we are dealing here with a trace of soul that generates the *thymos*, or may we just postulate a faculty of spiritedness itself? One can see here, we think, the influence of Plato's tripartite model of soul obtruding itself, even though Plotinus is in fact operating with a very different model.

In favor of a "higher" interpretation, Plotinus first adduces the fact that, unlike the case with desires, pleasures, and pains, we can be roused to anger by injustices done to

others, or bad behavior generally, this obviously entailing to at least a certain degree the rational reception of sense-impressions, and so derivation from some higher aspect of the soul. On the other hand, as he goes on to point out (28ff.), we can observe that proneness to anger appears to be built into the natures of certain beasts, depending on the quality of their blood and bile, irrespective of whether anything has been done to provoke them; and even in the case of humans, one may observe differences in irascibility depending on the subject's state of health, or whether or not they have been deprived of food. Even so, however, *thymos* needs a sense-datum, and/or a mental image, to provoke it, and, as remarked above, the latter can just as well be provided by the reason (*logismos*), on the basis of its cognition of an insult or an outrage, to oneself or to another; so that there is a case for connecting it with the higher soul as well.

28, 47–59 We are presented, then, with what appears to be a median sort of emotion, deriving more from the higher soul than do pleasure, pain, or desire. One can in fact distinguish two sources of *thymos*, one rising simply from the vegetative soul, though ultimately involving the reason by dint of generating *phantasiai*, while the other takes its start in the reason, but inevitably terminates in the vegetative and reproductive part (*phytikon kai gennêtikon*), and specifically in the blood around the heart

and in the bile. What acts as the link between the reason and the vegetative soul is, once again, the "trace" of soul (*psykhês ikhnos*), which provides a focus for the *thymos* by identifying the object against which the boiling of the blood can be directed.

28, 55–56 *Evidence for this being of the same substance* (homoousion): This use of the adjective *homoousios*, later such a key term in Christian Trinitarian controversies and doctrine, is notable, as Armstrong remarks *ad loc.* Plotinus seems to be the first extant author to use it (here and at IV.7 [2] 10, 18), but he is followed by Porphyry (*On Abstinence from Animal Food* I 19), Iamblichus (*On the Mysteries* III 21:*150*) and Syrianus (*Commentary on Aristotle Metaphysics* 129, 3), so he is not unique in the Hellenic tradition.

28, 59–64 *One should not be surprised*: It now occurs to Plotinus to speculate—rather whimsically, perhaps—as to why trees do not get angry, since they have vegetative souls. What they do not have, however, is blood or bile, and this means that they have nothing that can generate the "boiling" of the blood which is the physical manifestation of anger; and even if they did have, they would also need *aisthêsis*, in order to focus their anger on a perceived object—otherwise they could only achieve an unfocussed "irritation" (*aganaktêsis*).

28, 64–71 *But if the irrational part of the soul were to be divided*: Plotinus is still concerned here with the proper division of the soul along Platonist lines. If, he says, we (employing the Platonic system of "division," or *diairesis*) divide the irrational part of the soul into "desiring" (*epithymêtikon*) and "spirited" (*thymoeides*) parts, then it will appear that the *thymoeides* is simply a "trace" deriving from the vegetative soul as a whole, and thus posterior or secondary to the *epithymêtikon*, but this must be invalid, as a division can only be made between two coordinate entities. In fact, both are "posterior" (*hystera*), as the correct division is between two varieties of appetition (*orexis*), each being a "trace" emanating from that substance which is the soul proper, and which is logically and ontologically prior to them both.

28, 73–76 *And it is not absurd to say*: The conclusion that the soul is situated in the heart because feelings of anger seem to stem from that region is a distinctive argument of the Stoic Chrysippus, and Plotinus is concerned here to refute it from a Platonist perspective. All that is proved is that the source (*arkhê*) of the blood "in a certain state" (*tou haimatos tou toioude*)—that is, the state that generates anger—is there.

Chapter 29

A return here to the theme opened up in ch. 18: the nature of the union between soul and body, and specifically, the fate of the "trace" of soul in the body after the soul proper has departed in death.

29, 1–12 Plotinus now returns to the question of the departure of the soul from the body, recalling his imagery of the light and heat of the sun appealed to back in ch. 18, to distinguish the presence of soul proper in the body, which is like light, from that of "nature," or the trace of the lower World Soul (providing the basic life-force), which is more like heat. He entertains the objection that both of these entities seem to leave the body in death pretty promptly, but argues in response that in fact evidence of the continued presence of the life-force does remain in the form of the further growth of nails and hair in the recently deceased corpse.

One might be forgiven for wondering whether, within the seminar, there had been some doubts expressed as to the validity of Plotinus' rather radical theory of the separate origin of the *phytikon*, or life-force. After all, the idea that there are not one, but two, souls within the human being is historically a rather dualistic one, stemming from Numenius and certain Gnostic sources (cf. Dillon

1977, 375–376), and a theory with which Plotinus would not wish to be associated. His reason for postulating this "trace" of Nature within the human being is not to set up an antithetical "evil" soul, but rather to insulate the soul proper from subjection to emotions. For an earlier exposition of Plotinus' position on this question, one may look, for example, at IV.7 [2] 14.

29, 6–7 *And animals that have been cut in two*: A reference primarily to worms, but also to certain other insects, a fact already noted by Aristotle, *On the Soul* I 5, 411b19ff.: "Moreover plants clearly live even when divided, and some of the insects also; which implies that the parts have a soul specifically if not numerically the same as that of the whole."

29, 12–40 The question is, however, does this lower soul "withdraw," or does it simply dissolve? This latter, after all, might be asserted of the light and heat emanating from the sun after the sun sets. As a reason against the simple dissolution of the *phytikon*, Plotinus adduces (17–18), as he did in IV.7.14, the consideration "How can it come simply not to exist, when it existed before?" Of course, the mode in which the *phytikon* continues to exist is somewhat ambivalent, since it is really reintegrated into Nature as a whole, and so does not preserve a separate existence, but it does not just simply dissolve.

Plotinus, however, does not seem entirely willing to give up on even the idea of color somehow surviving the withdrawal of the light which makes it visible—again, perhaps, reflecting discussions within the seminar. He is prepared to suggest that color, like sweetness or fragrance, may depart into some other body that may act as a substratum for it, but which does not impinge on our senses (29–30). This seems an unnecessary speculation, since we already know that the individual *phytikon* has somewhere to go to, but it is interesting that Plotinus should feel the need to raise such an issue. In support of this, he now (32) makes reference to the dictum of the atomist Democritus (Frs. B 9 and 125 Diels-Kranz), to the effect that all secondary qualities—and the senses that perceive them—are "by convention" (*nomôi*), the only realities being atoms and void.

29, 40–55 In this final section of the chapter, Plotinus, in his effort to establish the separate fate of the lower soul, on the analogy of the light and color present in bodies, seems to descend into relative incoherence. It is hard to see what his problem is, in view of the arguments that he has presented earlier in favor of the separate provenance of the *phytikon*, but, as we say, he may have met with resistance within the seminar to his theory of the origin of the passionate and sensitive elements of the living being in the lower aspect of the World Soul, rather than as parts of the individual soul proper. He ends the chapter with the suggestion that examination is still required as to whether it is possible to

have a life-force without soul, except in the case that soul (or rather a "trace" of soul) is juxtaposed with it, providing a conduit to "something else"—which we may take to be the higher soul, or soul proper. But that, surely, is precisely what he has been seeking to establish, ever since ch. 18, if not earlier. This unwillingness to let go of a troublesome question is perhaps a tribute to the quality of his mind, but it makes for difficult reading.

29, 50 *Something that has been discussed elsewhere*: Plotinus is presumably referring to his earlier tractate IV.9 [8]: "On the Question Whether All Souls are One."

29, 55 At this point in the manuscripts, there is to be found the following curious note: "Up to here extended the second book *On the Soul* in the edition of Eustochius, and the third began; in the edition of Porphyry, on the other hand, what follows is joined to the second." Eustochius of Alexandria was Plotinus' physician and faithful follower, who was with him when he died (Porphyry, *Life of Plotinus*, chs. 2 and 7), and apparently produced, some time before that of Porphyry, an edition of at least some of his works. As far as one can discern, Eustochius also began his second book at IV.1; there is at any rate no annotation to the contrary. What is meant by "what follows" here is not quite clear, but probably Eustochius' third book included the "appendix," IV.5, as well.

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Index of Ancient Authors

Alcinous

Handbook of Platonism
Ch. 26 166, 246

Alexander of Aphrodisias

Mantissa
115, 32–33 263
132, 7–10 190

On Fate
166, 3 234

On the Soul
1, 4–2, 4 167
13, 9–15, 26 261
14, 19–15, 5 265
15, 9–28 269
40, 1–3 276

Aristotle

Categories
2a11–13 176

Generation of Animals
III 762a35–763b26 213

History of Animals
I 486a5–6 177

Metaphysics
V 1018b26–29 324
VII 1034b4–7 213

Nicomachean Ethics
VII 1145b27 402

On Dreams
458a15–16 276

On the Heavens
290b12–29 231

On Memory
449b4–9 308
449b15 322
449b31 310
450a31 293
450b5–7 294

On the Soul
402a4–7 167
403a8–9 274
404b27–30 178
408b11–15 291
408b15–18 290, 298
411b7–8 268
411b19ff. 415
412a4 171
413a9ff. 269
413b24–7 259
424a3ff. 274
424a18–19 185
427b28ff. 274
431a17ff. 310
432a16ff. 274
433a10ff. 274

Parts of Animals
666a7–8 276

Physics
I 187b1–3 305
II 194a21–22 223
IV 201a30–32 265
IV 210b12–13 266
IV 212a5–6 262
IV 221a18–30 365

Ps.-Aristotle

On the World
399b14–15 267

Cicero

Tusculan Disputations
5. 3, 8 203

Diogenes Laertius

Lives of the Philosophers
7. 31 281
7. 156 171
10. 38 325
10. 63 267

Hesiod

Theogony
521–531 237–238

Works and Days
237 339

Hippolytus Of Rome

Refutation of All Heresies
1. 3. 2 216

Homer

Iliad
4. 440–443 229

Odyssey
10. 97–99 336
11. 601–604 300
18. 353 247

Iamblichus

Commentary on the Timaeus
Fr. 87 288

On the Soul
19 172–173
25 172–173
26 189

Marcus Aurelius

Meditations
2. 16. 1 306
3. 3 263
5. 6. 5 306
12. 20 190

Orphicorum Fragmenta
Fr. 209 Kern 229

Plato

Alcibiades I
129e130a 301
132c 167

Cratylus
400c 392
437b3 298

Gorgias
497a–c 246

Laws
X 889a–e 222
X 903b–e 246
X 904a–e 280
X 905a–b 280, 318–319

Lysis
216c–218c 401

Parmenides
131a–e 178

Phaedo
65a9–10 259, 370
65b1 258
66b5 408
66c 370
81c–d 278–279, 301
96b 272

Phaedrus
240b3 393
246b–c 173, 175, 205, 318
246d–247e 249
246e4–5 349
247c 230, 269
248c 234
248e–249b 350
249c8–d1 318
265d1–266b1 324

Philebus
30a–c 204
30a3–8 172
30d1–2 350
31c–32b 377
35a2–4 383

Republic
III 407c 309
VI 509a 250
VI 509e–510a 220
VIII 557aff. 371
X 617b 232
X 617dff. 233–234,
X 617e5 244
X 619b–620d 209, 233–234, 280
X 621a–c 298

Statesman
288c 222

Symposium
200a–c 401

Theaetetus
191b–d 296

Timaeus
30b–d 210
33c1–2 399
34b 268
34b4 271
35a–b 189, 256–257
36d7–e1 217, 271
36e 267–268, 390
37c 224
38c–39e 224, 348, 390
40c 347, 390
41d 202, 204, 209, 389
41e–42a 202
42d 241
43a–c 298
44d–e 272
45b 399
47a–b 393
50c5 361
64a–c 386
69c–71d 258, 275
71a–72c 410
90c–d 172, 174, 206

Ps.-Plato

Axiochus
367d 378

Definitions
413d 309

Plotinus

Enneads
I.1.4, 26 365
1.1.8, 5–18 226, 341
I.1.8, 9 408
I.1.8, 15–18 226
I.1.11, 9–15 224, 337
I.1.12, 24ff. 301
I.2.3, 28–30 181
I.2.5 192
I.2.7, 4–5 346
I.3.4 253
I.3.4, 12–16 324
I.4.10, 4–6 272

I.4.10, 6–19 288, 312
I.4.12, 5–10 325
I.6.6, 12 354
I.8.2, 25 341
I.8.4, 28–32 218
I.8.10 296
II.1.4, 32–33 219
II.2.1, 1–11 347
II.3.13, 34–47 174
II.3.15, 17–28 174
II.3.17, 1–5 360
II.3.18 219, 245
II.4.1–5 212
II.4.10, 13ff. 218
II.4.10, 28–31 289
II.5.5,10 315, 408
II.9.2, 4–15 202
II.9.7, 9–15 218
II.9.8, 10–16 224
II.9.12, 18 222
II.9.18, 14–17 199, 201
III.1.1, 30 355
III.1.4, 4–8 235
III.1.8, 15–17 206
III.2.2, 14ff. 222
III.2.4, 24–28 280
III.2.16, 23–27 347
III.3.5–7 247
III.4.1, 1–9 235
III.4.1, 14–15 217
III.4.2, 11–30 208, 233, 314, 337
III.5.1, 65 299
III.5.6 255
III.5.8 232, 348
III.6.1–5 365, 373
III.6.1, 1–4 186
III.6.1, 1–7 293
III.6.2, 42–49 284
III.6.3, 27 196
III.6.4 393
III.6.4, 23–24 360
III.6.5, 26–29 241, 302
III.6.12 390
III.6.12, 12–16 191
III.7.11, 23–27 242, 325
III.7.13, 41–47 232, 323, 365
III.8 *passim* 200, 322
III.8.2–4 227
III.8.5 222
III.8.6, 14–17 325
III.8.6, 34–40 357
III.8.9, 21–22 324
III.9.3, 3 271
III.9.5 327
IV.1.1, 11–55 189
IV.1.1, 21 315
IV.1.1, 29–41 257
IV.2 171
IV.2, 9–22 190
IV.2.2 182
IV.2.2, 14–35 263
IV.5 396

IV.5.7, 41–42 363
IV.6.1 292
IV.6.2, 16–18 293
IV.6.3 284, 309
IV.6.3, 53–54 294
IV.7.1 166
IV.7.2, 18–25 294
IV.7.3 172
IV.7.4, 7 271
IV.7.6–8 172
IV.7.6, 22–24 295
IV.7.7 182
IV.7.7, 7–22 263
IV.7.8[5], 2–5 191
IV.7.10, 18 412
IV.7.14 415
IV.8.1–7 187, 332, 390
IV.8.1, 37 205
IV.8.1, 46–48 235
IV.8.2, 26–38 201
IV.8.3, 21–25 296
IV.8.4, 6–13 197
IV.8.4, 22 205
IV.8.4, 28 402
IV.8.4, 32 331
IV.8.5, 1–8 281
IV.8.7, 5–7 167
IV.8.8 232
IV.8.8, 11–16 199, 201
IV.9.1 166
IV.9.1, 6ff. 171
IV.9.2 345
IV.9.5 180
IV.9.5, 7 198
V.1.1, 20–30 211
V.1.1, 31–33 168
V.1.3, 7–9 181, 311
V.1.4, 20–28 195
V.1.8, 1–5 232
V.1.10, 5–6 329
V.1.10, 21 271
V.1.11, 4–13 251
V.1.12, 13 272
V.2.2, 26–29 229, 242
V.3.1, 4 402
V.3.2, 7–3, 2 255
V.5.3, 1–5 341
V.5.6, 4–15 194
V.5.9, 21ff. 271
V.6.4, 14–20 221
V.7 *passim* 193, 231
V.7.1, 2–7 211
V.7.3, 20–23 211
V.8.7, 2–8 353
V.8.7, 13–17 351
V.8.7, 17–21 254, 326
V.8.11, 7 402
V.9.3, 25–37 351
V.9.4, 11–12 328
V.9.5, 29–32 288
V.9.6, 1–9 211
V.9.6, 15–19 224
V.9.8, 3–7 195, 198
V.9.12 194

VI.2.21, 27–32 323
VI.3.9, 27–32 193
VI.4.3, 10–11 184, 214
VI.4.3, 19–22 224
VI.4.5 *passim* 183, 186
VI.4.5, 15 355
VI.4.9, 27 250
VI.4.11, 12–14 184
VI.4.14, 18ff. 239
VI.4.15, 8–18 200
VI.4.15, 16 362
VI.4.15, 23–32 371
VI.4.16, 24–26 180
VI.4.16, 37ff. 301
VI.5.4–5 251
VI.5.8, 39–46 194
VI.6.3, 34 220
VI.6.4, 11–17 323
VI.6.17, 1–18 211
VI.5.18, 1–12 211
VI.6.18, 20–25 354f
VI.7.1, 14–19 397
VI.7.1, 28–58 352
VI.7.5, 24ff. 301
VI.7.6, 11–21 210
VI.7.6, 17–18 209
VI.7.6, 20ff. 337
VI.7.6, 26–31 216
VI.7.7 233
VI.7.7, 8–16 279, 375
VI.7.7, 25–27 272
VI.7.15, 25–33 336
VI.7.11, 15–36 408
VI.7.35, 19–23 325
VI.7.9, 35–10, 7 254
VI.8.1–4 370
VI.8.5, 19–21 355
VI.8.6, 13–21 359
VI.8.17, 1–10 340, 383
VI.9.8, 1–30 251
VI.9.8, 31–45 227, 347

PLUTARCH

On the Creation of the Soul in the Timaeus
1012D 178

PORPHYRY

Life of Plotinus
2 417
3 172
7 417
13 269
14, 4–5 247
14, 10–14 167, 266
17 172
20 172
23 209, 332
26, 32–37 196

Pathways to the Intelligible
29 241, 243

To Gaurus
9.3 241
16.5 331

Proclus

Commentary on the Timaeus
I 276, 30ff. 217
I 352. 15–19 326
III 257, 30–260, 4 205

Elements of Theology
Props. 56–57 201, 316
Prop. 211 288

Platonic Theology
I 15, 18–21 326

Ps.-Philoponus

On Aristotle On the Soul
446, 5–13 187
535, 1ff. 168

Simplicius

On the Physics
p. 558, 29–37 265

Ps.-Simplicius

On Aristotle On the Soul
1, 4–5 165
6, 12–15 187
90, 29–91, 4 291
90, 30 267

Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta
1. 361 402
1. 484 296
2. 335 264
2. 343 296
2. 439 268
2. 458 360
2. 505–506 265
2. 534 208
2. 605 188
2. 774 171
2. 826 184
2. 863–872 190
2. 1013 208
3. 416 402

Index of Names and Subjects

Alexander of Aphrodisias 261
Amelius 171, 173, 204
anamnêsis 288
antilêpsis 272, 275, 393
Aristotle 209, 243, 282, 287, 289–290, 390
Armstrong, A. H. 185, 190, 194, 213, 225, 235, 243, 249, 264, 279, 284, 298, 317, 329, 344, 353, 356, 365, 371, 412
Aspasius 261
attention (*epibolê*) 344
Beierwaltes, W. 189, 363
Beutler, R. 186
Blumenthal, H. J. 171, 182, 189, 194–195, 200, 212, 253–254, 259–260, 283, 288, 293, 311, 361
brain 273, 275
Bréhier, E. 185, 313
Brisson, L. 202, 235, 238, 298, 346, 390
Callimachus 280–281
Christians 353–354, 356, 358, 412
Cilento, V. 185, 392, 213
circle 250, 368–369
consciousness 297, 370
dance 347
Demeter 407–408
Demiurge 357, 397
  identified with Intellect 232, 350, 358
  identified with soul 232, 338–339
Democritus 416
desire (*epithymia*) 380–382, 386, 410
Dillon, J. 340, 395, 414

Dionysus 229
Dodds, E. R. 168, 201, 216, 344
Dyad, Indefinite 212
Earth, soul of 387–392, 403–405
ellampsis 224
Epicurus 267, 325
Epimetheus 238–239
Eustochius of Alexandria 417
Fate 243
Ficino, M. 180–181, 266, 303, 385
Forms 169, 194–195, 303, 337, 348, 360–361
Galen 272, 275–276, 395
Gatti, M.-L. 171
Gerson, L. 194
Gnostics 354, 358, 414
Good, the 369
God 169, 82, 285, 341
Gottschalk, H. 203
Goulet-Cazé. M.-O. 196
Guthrie, W. K. C. 203
Hadot, P. 251, 254
Harder, R. 202, 213, 282
harmony, cosmic 231, 281–282, 347
Heaven 248
Helleman-Engersma, W. 170–171
Heracles 237–240, 300, 318–319
Hestia 407–408
Iamblichus 169, 395
Igal, J. 181–182, 184–185, 188, 213, 221, 284, 295, 326, 386
imagination (*phantasia*) 273–274, 304, 306–308, 310–311, 359–360, 381
  double *phantasia* 312–314, 317
Intellect 210, 219, 248, 285, 321–323, 326, 329–330, 348, 351, 359, 364
  as sun, 221, 227
intellect, individual 259, 288
James, W. 333
Justice, divine 245, 280
King, R. 295, 297, 318, 326
Kirchhoff, A. 181, 285, 313, 344, 365, 375
Lamberton, R. 238
light 190, 218, 221–222, 250, 362–363, 374
Lloyd, A. C. 212

logismos 253, 352, 357, 378, 386, 411
Logos, *logoi* 182, 210, 220, 224, 236, 287, 310–311, 351, 366–368
Lovelock, J. 403–404
MacKenna, S. 226, 298
magic 235
matter 211–212, 218, 327–328, 359–360
Meijer, P. A. 251
memory (*mnêmê*) 276–277
Nature (*physis*) 213, 234, 237, 239, 251, 299–300, 354, 359–362, 375, 381–382, 385, 415
Numenius 354, 414
O'Brien, D. 235
O'Daly, G. 244
O'Meara, D. J. 351
One, the 248, 250–252
orexis 273, 381
Pandora 237
Pépin, J. 238, 300
Philolaus 231
pleasure/pain 376–379
Plutarch 217
Porphyry 196, 269
Proclus 204
Prometheus 237–239
Pythagoras 231
reincarnation 233
Rist, J. M. 169, 189, 194, 212, 325
Schwyzer, H. R. 190, 254
self (*hêmeis*) 244, 300, 374–375
sense-perception (*aisthesis*) 273–274, 292–293, 304, 306–308, 398
Severus 171, 204
Smith, A. 189, 224, 243
Soul, hypostasis, 176, 251, 352, 361, 364, 367–368
soul, individual 171, 206, 252, 364
  soul-vehicle 241, 255, 279, 301–302, 394
  "shadow" or "trace" of 258, 365, 373–376, 395, 407, 412
  soul-body compound 291, 294, 371, 374–375
Soul, World 170, 199–200, 237, 240, 252, 349, 361, 364, 369, 398–407
Speusippus 217

Stoics 171, 182, 184, 207, 264, 296, 334, 360, 402, 405, 413
sympathy, cosmic 207, 403
Theiler, W. 185, 188, 216, 221, 245, 254, 287, 317
thymos 409–412
Time 285, 364
Warren, E. 283, 299, 305
Xenocrates 178, 217, 394
Zeus, as Demiurge 228, 338–389, 348–349

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